

# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

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## THESIS

### INSURGENCY IN URBAN AREAS: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOF

by

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June, 2000

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Many of the "small wars" that have occurred in the aftermath of the Cold War fit the profile of insurgent conflicts: they pit a constituted state vs. a counter-state, the counter-state relies on a support structure within the population, and the center-of-mass of these conflicts is political and psychological rather than military in nature. The urbanization boom in many underdeveloped countries has stretched the social services and infrastructure of the cities beyond the breaking point, and this dynamic may contribute to the occurrence of insurgency. Increasingly, political entrepreneurs have operated within urban areas to enlist disaffected individuals in campaigns of political conflict. This study argues that the most effective way to counter an insurgency is through a strategy of indirect approach that seeks to dismantle the insurgent support structures. The United States can support friendly governments that are combating insurgent violence through a "vertically integrated" advisory effort spearheaded by Special Operations Forces (SOF). These forces can assist a supported nation to develop a "counter-mobilization" framework that targets the *opportunity, means and motives* that allow an insurgency to exist. To attain success, the US should exploit the insurgents' vulnerabilities, defeat their strategy and allow SOF to advise on intelligence collection activities.

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IMPLICATIONS FOR SOF**

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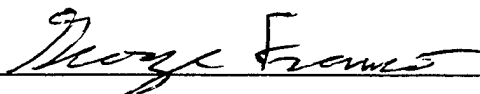
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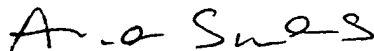


George H. Franco

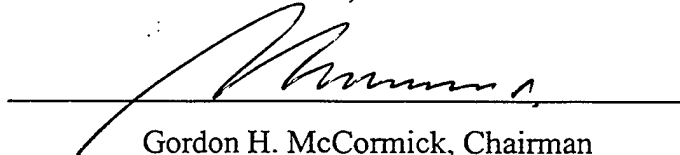
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## ABSTRACT

Many of the “small wars” that have occurred in the aftermath of the Cold War fit the profile of insurgent conflicts: they pit a constituted state vs. a counter-state, the counter-state relies on a support structure within the population, and the center-of-mass of these conflicts is political and psychological rather than military in nature. The urbanization boom in many underdeveloped countries has stretched the social services and infrastructure of the cities beyond the breaking point, and this dynamic may contribute to the occurrence of insurgency. Increasingly, political entrepreneurs have operated within urban areas to enlist disaffected individuals in campaigns of political conflict. This study argues that the most effective way to counter an insurgency is through a strategy of indirect approach that seeks to dismantle the insurgent support structures. The United States can support friendly governments that are combating insurgent violence through a “vertically integrated” advisory effort spearheaded by Special Operations Forces (SOF). These forces can assist a supported nation to develop a “counter-mobilization” framework that targets the *opportunity, means* and *motives* that allow an insurgency to exist. To attain success, the US should exploit the insurgents’ vulnerabilities, defeat their strategy and allow SOF to advise on intelligence collection activities.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Ironically, the further we have developed the "massive" effect of the bombing weapon, the more we have helped the progress of this new guerrilla-type strategy. Our own strategy should be based on a clear grasp of this concept, and our military policy needs re-orientation. There is a scope, and we might effectively develop it, for a counter-strategy of corresponding kind....The history of strategy is, fundamentally, a record of the application and evolution of the indirect approach.

B. H. Lidell Hart, Strategy, 1954

### A. BACKGROUND

During much of the 1930s and early 1940s, operatives of the Vietnamese Communist Party organized hundreds of village-level political action committees in the Vietnamese countryside. These operatives or *political entrepreneurs* helped organize local peasants in a variety of communal efforts. They implemented welfare and land management procedures, severed the peasants' dependency on local landlords, collected taxes, sold war bonds, and instituted a variety of cost sharing and community insurance measures. Through their efforts with the peasantry, these political entrepreneurs built the support structures that produced an economic surplus and an organizational framework for a national political struggle. They effectively rallied members of the lower and middle classes by compromising on traditional Marxist doctrine and emphasizing nationalist themes that had broad appeal. With the collapse of the Japanese occupation of Vietnam in 1945, the communists rose above several contending political parties and religious sects to seize power. Their struggle for a unified and communist Vietnam would last through three additional decades of war (Popkin, 1979).

Much like the Vietnamese communists of over a half-century ago, political entrepreneurs today are sowing the seeds that they hope will someday grow into political power. As a result of global patterns of urbanization, observers argue that the focal-point of insurgent activity is shifting from the rural hamlet to the urban centers of the Developing World. Many of the conflicts that have arisen in the post-Cold War period fit the profile of insurgent struggles. With the failure of the great communist experiment, political operatives have increasingly opted for alternative visions to mobilize their constituents. Today a number of conflicts are seen as revolving around religious fundamentalism, ethnic nationalism, and narcotics trafficking; each of these issues, however, relates to a specific mobilization framework. A mobilization framework defines what is wrong with the status quo and offers solutions that require collective action: it reflects the motives for action of a constituency and illustrates how the people's grievances and concerns exist within a broader political context. Political entrepreneurs use mobilization frameworks to energize their potential followers. In many instances, the mobilization process seeks to bring about change through the use of violence.

## **B. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this thesis is to propose the parameters for employing SOF with respect to the growing trend of urban insurgency and sub-state conflict in general. Despite some notable exceptions, the US Army's counterinsurgency doctrine primarily seeks to attain success through the military defeat of insurgent forces. *By contrast, this study will advocate a strategy of indirect approach that seeks to dismantle the support*

*structures that sustain an insurgency.* This thesis will address the following question: How do insurgencies operate in an urban environment? The answer to this question will illustrate how an effective counterinsurgency effort can synchronize resources into a campaign of political manipulation that can degrade the mobilizing mechanisms of an insurgency.

The military defines insurgency as “an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict” (Joint Pub 1-02). Another defining characteristic of insurgencies is that they rely on a human infrastructure within the population to mobilize a variety of resources. Like other forms of limited warfare, insurgent conflicts are driven primarily by political and psychological factors, rather than by the straightforward application of military force. Insurgencies are generally protracted conflicts in which the insurgent elements seek to gradually erode the power and control of the established regime.

### **C. URBANIZATION TRENDS AND INSURGENCY**

Since the 1940s various political observers and scholars have predicted that shantytowns, on the rims of cities in the Developing World, would provide an endless stream of young, poor, unskilled, uprooted males ready to answer any appeal to violence (Richards & Waterbury, 1990, p. 288). These predictions arose again with new vigor with the publication of *The Urbanization of Insurgency* (1994) by Jennifer Morrison Taw and Bruce Hoffman from the RAND Corporation. These authors point out that, “A demographic upheaval of unprecedented proportions is today transforming almost the

entire developing world...from a predominantly rural society to an urban one” (p. 1). In search of better economic opportunities, the rural poor have flooded into the shantytowns that surround many cities in the Developing World. Conditions of violence in the countryside have often compounded this trend. This urban migration has stretched the social services and infrastructure of the cities beyond the breaking point. Increasingly, political entrepreneurs have operated within these urban areas to enlist disaffected individuals in campaigns of political conflict. Estimates predict the continuation of urbanization trends throughout the world (United Nations, 1996).

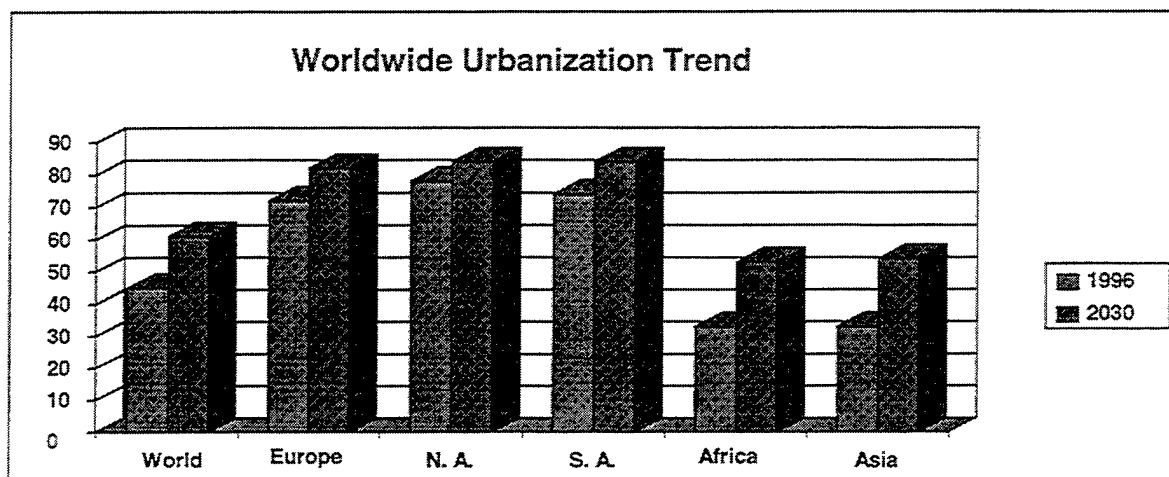


Figure 1. Worldwide Urbanization Trend

The high rates of population growth in Developing Nations will aggravate the problem of providing infrastructure and services for people in the cities (United Nations, 1998).

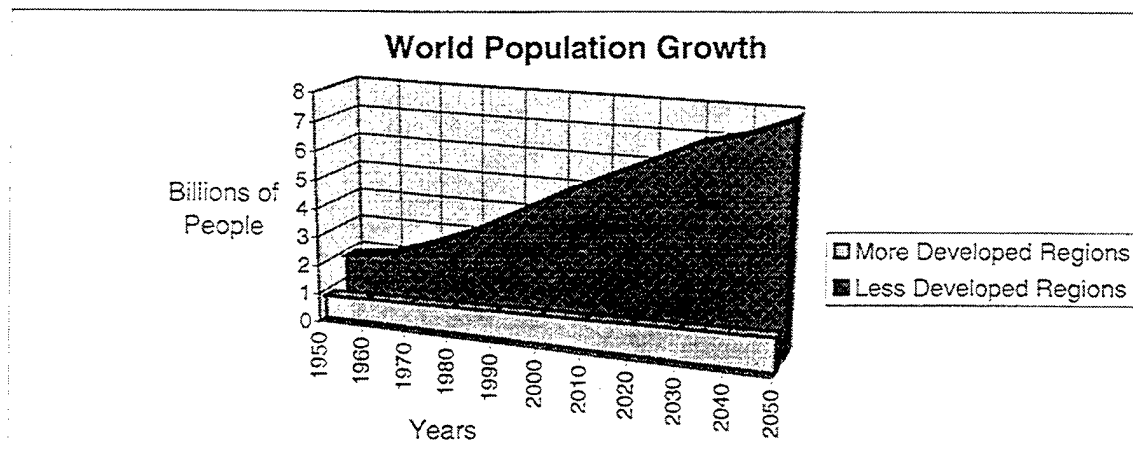


Figure 2. World Population Growth

In most instances, however, urbanization trends are not accurately predictive of insurgencies. Many impoverished communities have managed to escape the grip of violence. One of the reasons for this is that while governments have often failed to provide assistance to people migrating to the cities, a number of informal community support structures have facilitated the relocation process. People arriving from the countryside have managed to reconstitute kin, ethnic and religious associations in the cities and have generally been able to find work (Richards & Waterbury, 1990, p. 288). Nevertheless, in those instances in which insurgent situations do arise, they are increasingly likely to include various urban activities. An important reason for this is that insurgencies rely on people, and a greater number of disaffected individuals are likely to be living in urban areas than at any other time before. However, a dissatisfied population, by itself, is not sufficient to produce an insurgency.

The potential challenge of insurgencies in urban areas appears grave. Operating from within the relative sanctuary of densely populated cities, political entrepreneurs can



tap into a reservoir of urban dissatisfaction. They can exploit labor unions, student organizations, professional forums and a number of community groups to mobilize their constituents in collective action. These entrepreneurs now have new technologies at their disposal such as cell phones and the Internet that they can use for communications. They can also exploit the ever-present urban media in a campaign of symbolic violence that could potentially provoke an over-reaction by a country's security forces. Small urban insurgent elements can disrupt industry and public services, organize civil disturbances, conduct sniping, plant explosive devices, and engage in a variety of hit-and-run attacks. As in the extreme case of Chechnya, insurgents can potentially seize armories and fight pitched battles utilizing the urban terrain as an equalizer.

#### **D. METHODOLOGY**

This study will apply Resource Mobilization Theory to explore the dynamics of three insurgent conflicts in the post-Cold War period. The objective of this review is to gain insight into how political entrepreneurs have capitalized on *opportunities*, *means*, and *motives* to pursue a campaign of violence against their respective governments (Tilly, 1978, Robinson, 1999). This thesis will ask the following questions for each case study:

1. What political or structural opportunities existed for an insurgent campaign in each society? (*opportunity*)
2. What mobilizing structures or groups did entrepreneurs use to conduct collective action? (*means*)

3. What social or political framework did entrepreneurs use to relate the issues to their constituents? (*motive*)
4. What *tactical path* did each insurgent group follow and what role did urban activities play in their campaign plans?

This thesis will argue that an effective counterinsurgency effort must address each of the four variables listed above. This study will then consider the applicable lessons for the employment of SOF. Urban activities may be the exclusive focus of an insurgent effort, or they may be a component of a broader nation-wide struggle. The case studies for this thesis exemplify different versions of the urban insurgency phenomenon:

<u>Insurgent Group</u>	<u>Operational Base</u>	<u>Mobilization Frame</u>	<u>Operational Method</u>
Egyptian Islamist	Urban	Islamic Fundamentalism	Terrorism
Colombian FARC	Primarily Rural	Ideological/Entrepreneurial	Terrorism/Guerrilla Warfare
Chechen Separatist	Dual Urban & Rural	Ethnic – Mythology	Guerrilla/Conventional Warfare/Terrorism

Table 1. Case Studies

An urban-based insurgency seeks to gain control of major cities and expand its influence into the countryside. A traditional rural insurgency pursues a policy of encirclement that culminates in the seizure of cities.

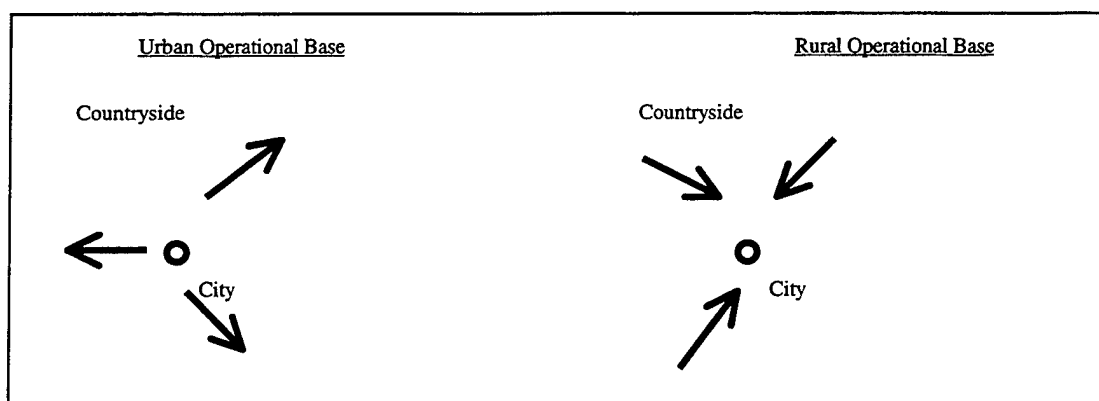


Figure 3. Urban and Rural Based Insurgency

#### E. THE COUNTER-MOBILIZATION APPROACH

Insurgent conflicts have a center of gravity that is political and psychological, rather than military in nature. That is to say, the course of these conflicts is primarily driven by political and psychological dynamics. By understanding the nature of insurgencies, the United States can employ unconventional methods as part of an integrated strategy – that is, a strategy that utilizes military, political, economic, and information resources in a synchronized manner.

In anticipation of the growing challenge of urban insurgency, the US should refine its doctrine and sensitize its leaders to the dynamics of the problem. While some doctrinal publications have assigned increasing importance to Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) activities, the military retains a bias towards a counter-force strategy. The problem with this *direct approach* is that insurgent forces are elusive and can often avoid decisive engagements. Furthermore, a counter-force strategy generally does not adequately counter the larger insurgent support infrastructure within the population. While a counter-force approach may succeed in killing enemy combatants,

the effort is pointless if the insurgents can quickly regenerate their losses. Alternatively, this thesis will advocate a counter-mobilization strategy that targets the human infrastructure of an insurgency, which provides logistics, intelligence, recruitment, economic resources and various support activities. While insurgent support networks may not be readily apparent because of their clandestine nature, they nevertheless constitute a point of vulnerability. The reason for this is that insurgent organizations lack logistical redundancy and absolutely depend on superior intelligence in order to survive.

An effective counterinsurgency strategy will need to limit political and structural opportunities for the insurgency, monitor and restrict the activities of mobilization groups, and counter the themes of insurgent elements. In addition to dealing with direct tactical challenges, a counterinsurgency effort must address the *opportunity, means* and *motives* that allow an insurgency to exist. These three factors are not discrete or measurable. In different situations, one factor may be more vulnerable to counter-action than others. But, an effective counterinsurgency campaign will consider and seek to restrict all three variables.

Efforts to demobilize the insurgency must take place under an umbrella of security that neutralizes direct tactical challenges. The use of selective violence by friendly forces will be successful only if it is surgically employed and integrated into a broader political effort. Future insurgent conflicts will demand the use of both persuasion and dissuasion; that is, a combination of both positive and negative incentives to influence the calculations of those contemplating participation in insurgent activities. Officials should

seek to shelter the population from the influence of insurgents and positively impact the citizenry's decision to cooperate with the regime.

A counterinsurgency campaign plan must recognize the interdependent relationship between insurgent forces and the auxiliary and underground infrastructure that mobilizes resources within the civilian population (FM 31-20). Members of the auxiliary provide logistics, recruitment, economic resources, intelligence and other support activities on either a part-time or full time basis. Individuals in the underground conduct acts of extortion, intimidation, subversion, sabotage, intelligence collection and symbolic violence. As depicted in the following figure, the clandestine components of the insurgent organization are the ones that most commonly extend into urban areas, which might be nominally under government control.

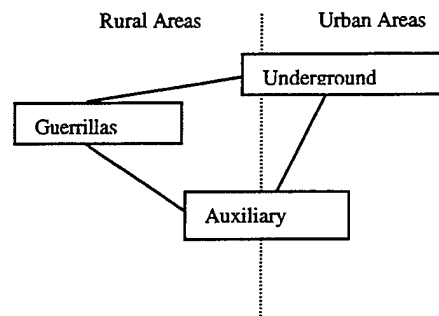


Figure 4. Organizational Components of an Insurgency

The approach advocated in this thesis seeks to counter the three functionally distinct components of an insurgent organization, whether they are operating in urban or in rural areas. Counterinsurgency forces need to confront the full depth of the insurgency's organizational structure and to neutralize its critical support functions.

## F. IMPLICATIONS FOR SOF

As a result of its Desert Storm success, the United States has shown an over-reliance on its conventional military to address regional contingencies: Haiti, Bosnia, Somalia, Kosovo, etc. However, conventional military force seems ill-suited for dealing with the cultural and political intricacies of insurgent conflicts. Additionally, the repeated use of conventional force threatens to exhaust the resources of the United States. Nevertheless, the United States can expect to have its interests at stake in future insurgent wars around the globe. The employment of a SOF advisory effort is an option that is both sustainable for the United States and politically acceptable for most supported nations.

SOF is ideally suited to influence sub-state conflicts in the future, while still allowing the United States to exercise an economy-of-force. While the general context for a SOF advisory effort and for an IDAD campaign is already outlined in Joint Pub 3-07.1 *Joint Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense* (26 June 1996), there is much room for doctrinal refinement. Army Special Forces soldiers, who are knowledgeable of a local culture and language, can provide advisory support. While US ambassadors would direct any multi-agency effort on behalf of a supported nation, Special Forces advisors can help synchronize the activities of US government agencies and other SOF assets with those of the Host Nation. SOF personnel can help to strengthen a supported nation's institutions and to develop a comprehensive counterinsurgency campaign plan. Such a plan must aggressively employ Civic Action, foreign development programs, Psychological Operations, human intelligence activities, population security measures, and carefully targeted combat operations. US advisors

must coach friendly governments to offer limited political concessions as a means of dividing their opponents.

Within this framework, the intelligence effort is the single most critical aspect of a counterinsurgency campaign. To this end, SOF possesses an intelligence collection potential that has never been fully realized. While the United States has an impressive array of intelligence collection capabilities, many in the military would argue that the national intelligence services are unresponsive to the immediate needs of tactical level commanders. Regionally oriented Army Special Forces, working in conjunction with indigenous forces, should address the tactical human intelligence (HUMINT) problem. In doing so, Special Forces personnel would venture into areas that have traditionally been the responsibility of the intelligence and law-enforcement communities. Nevertheless, enhancing a supported nation's tactical HUMINT capability would be the key to dismantling the insurgent infrastructure.

## **G. CONCLUSION**

This thesis will attempt to explore how insurgencies operate in urban areas. To accomplish this task, this study will use Resource Mobilization Theory to describe the insurgent process in three contemporary settings. The next chapter will describe various theories of political conflict and why Resource Mobilization Theory is most suitable to the objectives of this thesis. The chapters after that will describe events and conditions in the three case-studies and will attempt to expand on the parameters for SOF employment discussed in this introduction.

## **II. UNDERSTANDING RESOURCE MOBILIZATION**

The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgement that a statesman and commander have to make is to establish...the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature.

Carl von Clausewitz  
(James, 1986)

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Students of revolution generally divide into three schools-of-thought: structural, agency and resource mobilization. This chapter will argue that the resource mobilization approach is the most useful framework because it brings a comprehensive and holistic approach to the study of the phenomenon. While this chapter will survey many of the existing theories on revolutions and highlight some of their strengths and weaknesses, the intent is not to refute any particular theory. Both structural and agency based theories analyze dynamics that may be active to varying degrees in specific insurgent situations. Some structural theories may be especially useful in trying to predict successful revolutions. Agency theories can assist us in understanding the critical action of political entrepreneurs. Yet, if our objective is to study political violence in its various manifestations, then resource mobilization will tend to provide us with the most comprehensive and flexible approach.

### **B. THE LIMITS OF STRUCTURALISM**

Karl Marx would probably be the stereotypical example of a true structuralist. Marx viewed history as the consequence of class struggle (1978, p. 473). He predicted that social revolutions would be the product of the inevitable conflict between the



bourgeoisie who controlled the means of production and exchange and the proletariat who provided society's unskilled workforce (Marx, p. 474). The classical economist David Ricardo influenced Marx. Ricardo contended that if economic growth is to continue, all factors of production must increase in equal proportion: land, labor, capital (and theoretically other raw materials) (Gilpin, 1981, p. 71). Given the finite nature of the world, Marx believed that capitalism and its emphasis on continued growth through expansion was unsustainable. Marx felt that the bourgeoisie's need to maximize profits and the proletariat's weak bargaining position would result in the progressive exploitation of the working class and in eventual political violence.

The notion of class conflict and exploitation as a contributing cause to social revolutions seems intuitively valid. However, it is not an inevitable dynamic. Marx and Ricardo failed to factor in the advent of modern technology. Technological advances increase the productivity of existing resources (or develop alternatives); as a result, quantitative increases in all factors of production are not necessary for economic growth to continue (Gilpin, 1981, p. 71). Modern agricultural methods, for example, produce more crops with less labor per unit of land than at any previous time.

Within the Marxist tradition, Immanuel Wallerstein (1984) viewed a similar dynamic of intrinsic or systemic exploitation between nations in the industrialized core, the underdeveloped periphery and the partially industrialized semi-periphery of the World Capitalist System. Wallerstein correctly observed that a world economy does exist and that nations seek to maximize their influence on the international system through military, economic and political means. However, the argument that capitalist economies have

powerful incentives to expand through trade (and investment) does not support the notion that they contribute to the underdevelopment of the Third World (Gilpin, 1981, p. 81). Wallerstein's theory fails to account for the observance of simultaneous economic growth in nations of the core, periphery, and semi-periphery; furthermore, it cannot explain the emergence of the Newly Industrialized States on the Asian Pacific rim. His observations help explain instances of international conflict as the expanding influence of nations come into conflict with each other. However, his contentions on domestic political violence are based on the same finite views of the means of production (especially of capital) as those of Marx. In other words, Wallerstein contends that for a nation to get richer, another nation must get poorer. This mercantile characterization of the world is simply false. In fact, the world economy creates capital and parallel growth normally does occur.

Samuel Huntington (1968) provided a different structural perspective; he viewed revolutionary struggles as a product of modernization. He contended that revolutions were likely to occur in societies that had experienced some social and economic modernization, but where political development lagged far behind (Huntington, 1968, p. 265). Huntington claimed that revolutions require both institutions that resist the expansion of political participation and social groups that demand it (p. 276). He also argued that the probability of revolution will depend on the extent of alienation of various groups and on the willingness of these groups to work together to bring about political change (p. 277). It seems quite reasonable to believe that non-adaptive political institutions will become increasingly archaic in a society that is experiencing social and

economic modernization. However, Huntington's approach raises more questions than it answers. Are there alternatives other than state capitulation or revolution? When has enough modernization taken place to compromise a society's political system? How do social groups carry out political action? When are groups successful and when are they not?

Like Marx, Wallerstein and Huntington, other structural theorists have sought to identify the critical conditions that lead to revolutions. These authors have identified a number of potential factors, to include: taxation and state organization (Skocpol, 1994); population growth (Goldstone, 1991); state weakness (Migdal, 1988). In the case of Barrington Moore (1966), his structural theory also helps explain what type of society might emerge from a revolutionary struggle. Yet all of these theories suffer from many of the same weaknesses.

Structural theories are deterministic in nature. In other words, they predict that if the conditions are right, we will have a revolution (i.e. revolutions are not made). The nineteenth century scientists who first advocated determinism believed that once man understood the laws of science that all occurrences in the universe (to include human behavior) would be predictable (Hawking, 1988, p. 53). The study of quantum mechanics in the twentieth century, however, taught us that when our theoretical ability to measure conditions precisely is limited, at best we can only predict different possible outcomes and their likelihood of occurring (Hawking, 1988, p. 55). Being able to measure conditions accurately poses a significant problem in a society facing a potential revolution, where human passions and decision-making influence the course of events.

Structural theories use as evidence only a limited number of revolutions that have occurred in the past; as a result, their predictions about the future character of revolutions are potentially unreliable. Additionally, it is often difficult to know if a structural dynamic is relevant until after events have unfolded. Structural theories ignore the role of historical precedents and perceptions in specific societies. Furthermore, they downplay or reject the importance of actors and deny a society the element of freewill to chart its own political path. Structural theories also tell us little about political violence that falls below the threshold of a successful revolution. All of these factors are an indication that structural theories are potentially unreliable when they are applied to diverse situations. Furthermore, structural theories appear to lack the descriptive and explanatory insights required by the prospective counter-revolutionary.

A process of urbanization, which overwhelms the existing infrastructure and government services in a developing nation, can also contribute to the occurrence of a revolutionary struggle. Yet, like population growth, state weakness, class conflict and the other structural factors mentioned in this section, the mere presence or intensification of urbanization is not sufficient to accurately predict political violence. This thesis will seek to show that structural conditions help shape the opportunities and motives for revolutionary struggles to take place. Political entrepreneurs and their followers may or may not act as a result of these conditions to conduct a violent political campaign. Furthermore, a theory of revolutions based on urbanization would seem to suffer many of the same descriptive limitations, as outlined in this section, that are common to the other structural approaches.

### C. THE INSIGHTS OF AGENCY BASED THEORIES

Agency based theories emphasize the importance of the individual and attempt to predict outcomes on the basis of rational choice. They give us valuable insight into the action of political entrepreneurs and the challenges of collective action. These theories tend to explain political action that falls well below the revolutionary threshold, but that is nonetheless of interest.

Samuel L. Popkin (1993), for example, highlights the importance of the individual revolutionary or political entrepreneur to the revolutionary process. He argues that individual entrepreneurs build grass-roots political institutions (Popkin, 1993, p. 9). These institutions, in turn, generate the necessary surplus or profits and provide the organizational framework for a political struggle. Popkin also claims that political entrepreneurs provide the needed leadership to develop cooperation (p. 20). They influence the calculations of those who are contemplating participation in a political movement by providing selective incentives for cooperation.

Michael Taylor (1993) further elaborates on the challenges of collective action. Under strict conditions of rational choice, individuals would opt not to participate in a revolution because of fear of state retribution: imprisonment, torture, death, etc. This fact is compounded by the individual's realization that if the revolution is successful without his participation, he will still enjoy its benefits. Bonds of community solidarity, Taylor contends, overcome this *free-rider* dynamic (p. 64). He argues that strong local level communities with established social frameworks are more readily mobilized for collective action (p. 70). Taylor claims that within small groups, a variety of factors can

make an individual's decision to participate in a group effort conform to what he calls *thin* rationality (p. 67, 85):

...conditional cooperation is more likely to be rational (before selective incentives are brought in) in small groups rather than in large ones. It is also more likely to succeed in conditions where relations between people are those characteristic of *community* - not just because individual behavior can more easily be monitored, but because a strong community has at its disposal an array of powerful, positive and negative social sanctions which are highly effective in maintaining social order and in the provision of other public goods...

James Tong (1993) argues that the decision to participate in revolutionary activity is not only influenced by the severity of potential punishment, but also by perceptions of its likelihood (p.124, 128). Alan Richards (1995) adds to this analysis by highlighting the fact that individuals may be motivated by their personal grievances, sense of identity, and altruistic values (p. 2, 21). Jack Goldstone (1994) reinforces Taylor's observations by stating that individuals ultimately decide to participate in collective action within the contexts of formal and informal groups (p. 142). The decision to participate, he argues, tends to be the product of deliberation and is affected by group dynamics and a group's belief system.

Where as structural theories focus on the state or international system, agency-based theories focus on the individual. Structural theories tend to emphasize the determinants of successful revolutions. Agency theories tend to analyze the mechanics of how political entrepreneurs mobilize followers for the conduct of a political struggle. While agency-based theories give us valuable insight into the processes of collective action, they do not lay claim to the broad predictive power often suggested by structural theories.

#### **D. IN DEFENSE OF RESOURCE MOBILIZATION**

Resource mobilization theories combine elements of both agency and structural-based explanations. Resource mobilization theories focus on the group as the unit level-of-analysis. These theories explain how groups attempting to overthrow an existing regime mobilize resources in support of their political efforts. In many respects, resource mobilization is more of an analytical model than it is a theory; it does not focus on a single specific dynamic.

Charles Tilly presents a framework that is typical of the resource mobilization school. His model attempts to demonstrate how all the various elements of collective action interact (Billings, 1998, p. 19). The analytical components of Tilly's model are the following: group interests (motive), organization and level of mobilization (means), opportunity to act (opportunity), and tactics of collective action.

Sidney Tarrow elaborates upon Tilly's model and provides a refined framework that is also typical of the resource mobilization approach. His model is applicable to a broad spectrum of political contention. The core of his analysis is as follows:

...contentious politics is produced when political opportunities broaden, when they demonstrate the potential for alliances, and when they reveal the opponents' vulnerability. Contention crystallizes into a social movement when it taps embedded social networks and connective structures and produces collective action frames and supportive identities able to sustain contention with powerful opponents (Tarrow, 1998, p. 23).

In essence, Tarrow's model also analyzes political action as the product of opportunity, means and motive. First, opportunity arises in the form of various manifestations of weakness in the ruling regime: splits among the elites, a breakdown of the instruments of repression, etc. This notion is similar to the perspectives on state

weakness provided by Skocpol and Migdal. Second, the existence or creation of mobilizing structures provides the means for carrying out political activity against the regime. Various types of formal and informal organizations and networks may constitute these mobilizing structures. They, in essence, provide the group setting that Goldstone argues is so critical to the rational choice process. Third, political entrepreneurs use a social or political framework in order to relate the issues to a broader constituency. This is the core of the agency perspective. By capitalizing on cultural and ideological symbols and ideas, political entrepreneurs mark out the parameters of a campaign and energize their constituents. These entrepreneurs highlight the motives for a political effort. Finally, Tarrow (1998) argues that a movement must select its political path from a "repertoire of contention" (p. 30). A movement must, in essence, choose the best course of action to change the status quo. The conduct of a violent insurgent struggle is one possible option.

While resource mobilization models center on the role of groups as mobilizing structures, they do draw on various levels-of-analysis: individual, group, and the state. In this way they integrate concepts from both structural and agency-based theories. Resource mobilization models provide us with a comprehensiveness that is not possible with theories that focus on a single dynamic and level-of-analysis. The analytical framework of the resource mobilization approach is inherently flexible and applicable to a broad range of political movements, including those that fall below the revolutionary threshold. As with quantum mechanics, these models offer us a number of alternative paths and possible outcomes. The burden is then placed on the observer to apply the



framework to specific occurrences. While this approach is not as elegant as those offered by classical theories, it has greater explanatory and descriptive power: the approach can provide insights into the action of political entrepreneurs, trends within a society, and the role played by groups in the mobilization process.

Both Tilly's and Tarrow's models attempt to present flexible frameworks that encompass alternative paths of political action. Their approach is in contrast to the rigid structural theories that are overly deterministic and often lack the ability to address low level political activity. Structural theories often highlight the trends that produce the opportunities and motives for mobilization activity to take place. But, the resource mobilization framework provides an operative setting for agency-based dynamics.

Nathan Leites and Charles Wolf (1970) provide yet another approach within the resource mobilization perspective. In essence, these two authors view the insurgent organization as a system that draws various resource inputs and transforms them into revolutionary outputs. Their model is as follows (Leites & Wolf, 1970, p.35):

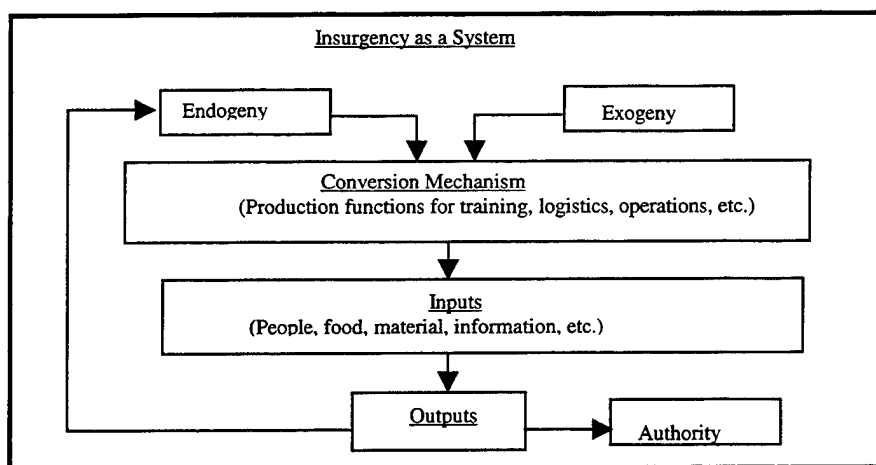


Figure 5. Leites and Wolf Model

While the Leites and Wolf model is useful, it fails to shed light on how the conversion process takes place. Agency-based theories and the previously discussed resource mobilization models attempt to capture the dynamics of this very process.

Resource mobilization models are distinctive in their emphasis on groups as the unit level-of-analysis. However, in focusing on groups, these models also say something about the state structure in which groups operate and something about individuals that operate within groups. Their systematic approach to the subject of political mobilization effectively counters any charges of ad hoc-ism. While the resource mobilization approach can describe both violent and non-violent political campaigns, this thesis will apply the framework to the study of contemporary insurgencies that utilize violence to achieve their aims.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

The resource mobilization approach is the most useful framework with which to explore the conduct of revolutionary struggles and political action in general because it brings a holistic approach to the study of the phenomenon. Applied to the problem of violent insurgencies, the resource mobilization perspective systematically allows us to study a number of dynamics, alternative paths, and possible outcomes. For these reasons, this study will apply a synthesis of the Tilly and Tarrow models to examine the case studies in the following chapters.

Specifically, this study will analyze how insurgent groups utilize the means, motives and opportunities that are available to them to mobilize resources on behalf of a

violent political campaign. By exploring fundamentally dissimilar case studies, this thesis hopes to uncover different aspects of the insurgency problem and to explore the special challenges posed by insurgent activities in urban areas.

### III. THE ISLAMIST MOVEMENT IN EGYPT

Fundamental to all else is the belief that countries with legislative bodies simply cannot take a war of attrition, either financially or, in the long run, psychologically. Indeed, the very fact of a multi-party structure makes commitment to a long war so politically suicidal as to be quite impossible.

Mao  
(Mack, 1975)

#### A. INTRODUCTION

On 17 November 1997, six Islamist gunmen assaulted the ancient temple of Queen Hatshepsut near Luxor in Egypt. The attack resulted in the deaths of 58 foreign tourists and four Egyptians and was the bloodiest in a series of terrorist actions against the tourist industry in that nation. The *al-Gama'a al-Islamiya*, or Islamic Group, claimed responsibility for the attack and reiterated its demands for the introduction of Islamic Law in Egypt, the severing of diplomatic relations with Israel, and the freeing of jailed activists (Amnesty International, September 1998, p.4). The Islamic Group and the somewhat less active *al-Gihad* are the most radical and violent components of a much broader Islamist insurgent movement in Egypt that seeks to depose the regime of President Hosni Mubarak.

The Islamist Movement in Egypt is worthy of study for a number of reasons: 1) Egypt illustrates the urban overpopulation and collapsing infrastructure that many observers see as contributing to future insurgencies. 2) Religious fundamentalism is increasingly at the center of conflicts throughout the world. 3) Islamic extremism is a credible threat to Western interests both within and outside the Middle East, and it requires monitoring on the part of the United States.

The rise of Islamist Revolutionaries in Egypt is the result both of changes in the country's social structure and action by political entrepreneurs. Egypt has experienced disjointed modernization, where upgrades to the nation's infrastructure and social services have failed to keep pace with the demands of a growing and modernizing society. The country has also experienced a faltering economy and restrictions on political freedom that have contributed to the dissatisfaction of individuals who are antagonistic to the Egyptian regime. In turn, Islamic political activists have used community forums to mobilize disaffected individuals in support of a national political campaign. This urban mobilization process may be seen with increasing frequency in future insurgent struggles as governments around the globe struggle to cope with urbanization trends.

## **B. THE FAILURE OF THE NASSER REVOLUTION**

Egypt illustrates the pattern of "Islamic resurgence" identified by Middle East scholar Alan Richards (1995). In this resurgence, a rising professional-class, frustrated intellectuals, and the unemployed poor forge a limited partnership for the purposes of pursuing political change (p. 2). These groups believe that the state does not reflect their values and interests. Furthermore, they feel that the existing regime cannot satisfy their needs and expectations.

The *al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* or Muslim Brotherhood has long represented Egypt's mainstream Islamist movement. The organization has been successful in its recruitment efforts because many feel that successive Egyptian leaders have failed to fulfill the

nationalist promises of the Nasser period. Many individuals have been especially frustrated with: 1) the government's failure to create a modern, viable society and economy, and 2) the failure to defend the Arab nation against Israel and the West (Richards, 1995, p. 11).

The rise to power of President Gamal Abdel Nasser was accompanied by a surge in nationalist feelings and in the general expectations of the Egyptian people. Nasser successfully negotiated the withdrawal of British forces from Egypt in 1954. Thereafter, however, his regime became involved in a number of ill-fated international initiatives. In an effort to acquire armaments, Nasser sought closer relations with the Eastern Bloc. In retaliation, the World Bank rejected Egypt's request for a loan to finance the Aswan High Dam. Nasser, in turn, nationalized the Suez Canal in July of 1956 and precipitated a conflict with Britain, France and Israel. In 1962 Nasser became embroiled in a messy civil war in Yemen by backing a republican movement against monarchist forces. Finally, in 1967 Nasser closed the Strait of Tiran to Israeli shipping and demanded the withdrawal of UN forces from Egypt's border with the Jewish State. These actions resulted in the disastrous Six Day war with Israel (Encarta, 1997).

Within Egypt, Nasser nationalized local industry, public utilities and foreign capital invested within the country. Nasser's regime also suppressed political opposition and established a one-party system under what became the Arab Socialist Union (Encarta, 1997). Members of the Muslim Brotherhood fled to Saudi Arabia. There, many of them accumulated wealth and established lasting ties with local merchants who helped support their political activities in the years that followed (Richards, 1995, p. 6). Aided by

influential Egyptian businessmen, many members of the Muslim Brotherhood returned to Egypt during Sadat's rule in the 1970s (Ayubi, 1991). In their home country, they found growing segments of the population that were frustrated by the economic and social status quo.

Almost 99 percent of Egypt's 63 million inhabitants live in the Nile River Valley and delta, which constitutes less than 4 percent of the nation's total area. The Nile Valley is among the most densely populated areas in the world. Additionally, Egypt has a significant population growth rate of 2.2 percent per year and 43 percent of its population lives in urban areas (Encarta, 1997; Ministry of Economy, 1996). These demographics have severely taxed the nation's infrastructure and social services. The country's economy has tended to perform poorly and has experienced a punishing unemployment rate that at times has been in excess of 20 percent (Antisemitism, 1997). Against this backdrop of economic underachievement and political disenchantment, the Islamist movement experienced a defining moment when on 26 March 1979 Egypt signed the Camp David accords. Much of the Arab world denounced Egypt for making a separate peace with Israel, and some Arab leaders branded Sadat a traitor to the Arab cause (Encarta, 1997). The failure of Arab socialism and the disillusionment of many Egyptians with the Nasser and Sadat regimes provided the Islamist movement with the political *opportunity* to enlist disaffected individuals in a national political struggle.

### C. TOWARDS A MODERN ISLAM

Egyptian activists were able to present the notion of an Islamic state as an alternative to Nasser's failed model of Arab socialism. Although there are no indications of collaboration with Ayatollah Khomeini's Shiite regime, the success of Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1978 may have further inspired the Islamists in Egypt. The ill-defined notion of an Islamic state became the *motive* around which political activists sought to rally their constituents. This mobilization framework, however, was particularly handicapped in a country where many citizens espoused secular views and where western influence had been more pervasive than elsewhere in the region.

One advantage Islamism had, though, was its lack of specificity. Socialism clearly outlines the relationship of the individual with the state, the management of the economy, and restrictions on private property. Islamism, by contrast, was not defined in many areas beyond the imposition of Islamic law (Robinson, 1999). This, in turn, allowed political entrepreneurs to present their vision of the future in different ways to different people. Clearly, the appeal to many Egyptians was not to reverse modernization and return their country to some sort of ideal past. On the contrary, most disaffected Egyptians hoped to build a modern society with a more robust economy. Similarly, the Islamist movement appealed to many individuals in the rising professional-class who could not compete with the system of patronage that preferentially benefited members of the traditional elite.



#### **D. URBAN FORUMS AND THE DYNAMICS OF COLLECTIVE ACTION**

Professionals from various disciplines had already begun to form an Islamist counter-elite at the time of the Muslim Brotherhood's return to Egypt. Members of this counter-elite often worked through professional organizations to foster political collective action (Ayubi, 1991). Lawyers, physicians, engineers and university professors became active supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood through their participation in various professional forums (No Justice for Civilians, 11 November 1999). Disaffected students and the unemployed poor also joined and swelled the ranks of a rising Islamist movement (Richards, 1995, p. 7). The lack of economic opportunities played a major role in mobilizing these groups on behalf of Islamic activism (Richards, 1995, p. 11):

The legacy of failure is long and dismal: stagnant per capita incomes; rising unemployment; overburdened infrastructure; weak educational systems which deliver enough education to change expectations but too little to fulfill them; rising international indebtedness; precarious food security; deteriorating physical environment. A brief sketch of the recent economic history of the region will illustrate how these problems arose, and how these failures have contributed to the increasing strength of Islamism.

With this backdrop, Islamist political entrepreneurs have undertaken collective action to mobilize their constituents. The challenge before these activists has been to convince potential followers to overcome their natural tendency to act as free-riders; individuals often hope to benefit from a political struggle while avoiding the risks of direct participation. In this regard, the credible Egyptian security apparatus has acted as a major deterrent to the increased participation of citizens in the movement; it in essence has limited the window of *opportunity* that has allowed the movement to exist, but not to succeed.

In order to overcome the fear of the internal security organizations, Islamist political entrepreneurs have exploited group bonds to enlist the participation of new members. They have accomplished this by relying on a structure of small groups where individuals come to know each other intimately. In such a setting, elements of peer pressure and personal accountability are more effective in leveraging individuals to cooperate (Goldstone, 1994, p. 144).

The Muslim Brotherhood mobilized its participants around relatively small groups of five to ten individuals composed of close friends or even relatives. "The entire movement was built around small, semi-independent cells geared to the particular needs and aspirations of their members" (Denoeux, 1993, p. 94). Within this framework and through a series of professional, community, and student organizations, the Muslim Brotherhood selectively provided incentives to individuals in exchange for their participation in the movement. An example of the use of these incentives by Islamist activists is as follows:

...Islamist student jama'at in Egypt provide their members with low cost lecture notes and textbooks, mini-bus transportation for (veiled) women, and access to the study groups and tutoring services necessary to pass examinations. Islamic organizations provide day-care centers, private medical clinics and even hospitals and schools (Richards, 1995, p. 16).

In addition to the use of selective incentives, the Islamist movement offered individuals a sense of group identity and the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of their countrymen. Within a context of repeated interactions with group members in mosques and welfare activities, individuals grew to trust and respect each other (Richards, 1995, p. 21). In turn the leveraging influence of the group over the egoistic

tendencies of the individual also grew. The network of activists that emerged provided the Muslim Brotherhood with the *means* to mount its political campaign.

An interesting dynamic of the mobilization process within groups is that individuals undergo a transformation of their norms and standards of conduct; a person would feel regret if others participate in activities and make sacrifices while he does not. An individual would therefore choose to participate in the Islamist movement once he developed a strong sense of group identity and felt that others within his group were going to participate.

Once established, such identity leads individuals to feel outrage or distress at injuries to other members of the group, and can create severe emotional costs for actions that are inconsistent with the group's welfare and identity-sustaining norms. Under such conditions, the desire to participate with the group in specific actions-even personally risky actions-depends less or not at all on the instrumental value of such actions for the individual and far more on whether such actions are believed to protect the long-term viability, effectiveness, or identity of the group (Calhoun, 1991).

Acts of state repression against well-defined social protest groups may seem exceedingly egregious to group members and may be counterproductive for the state. In many instances these acts may incite individuals into cooperation with more militant factions or they may radicalize the movement as a whole.

#### **E. SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE AND THE TACTICS OF NECESSITY**

Violent splinter groups appeared over time within the Islamist movement. Authorities credited the *al-Gihad* for the 1981 assassination of President Anwar Sadat. The Islamic Group also rose in prominence following the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City. A US court sentenced the group's spiritual leader, Sheikh Omar Abdal-Rahman, to life imprisonment for his role in the conspiracy. Within

Egypt, these extremist groups targeted their violence not only against security forces, but also against foreigners and Coptic Christians (Antisemitism, 1997; Amnesty International 1998). Egyptian authorities estimate that the followers of the Orthodox Coptic Church constitute roughly ten percent of the nation's population (Lyon, 3 January 2000).

The use of terrorist tactics by radical groups within the Islamist movement is the product of several factors. In many ways, violence is part of the radicalization process that occurs in isolated underground political groups (Crenshaw, 1985). Additionally, the use of terrorism may reflect the fact that other violent options are not viable in Egypt. For example, the Islamist movement has not gained the type of following that would allow an open revolt similar to the one experienced in Iran. Furthermore, terrorism can also be seen as the product of Egyptian demographics and geography that prohibit a rural guerrilla type strategy.

The National Democratic Party (NDP), a direct descendant of Nasser's revolutionary regime, emerged following the break-up of the Arab Socialist Union in 1976 (Encyclopedia of the Orient, 1997). The party has had a stranglehold on national and local politics and has governed the country since 1978. The State of Emergency, which authorities imposed in 1981 following the assassination of President Anwar Sadat, remains in force and allows the government to exercise a number of repressive measures (Antisemitism, 1997). In November of 1995, President Mubarak, just before parliamentary elections, charged members of the Muslim Brotherhood with helping violent Islamic groups. Authorities shortly thereafter arrested many members of the Muslim Brotherhood, to include individuals who were running in the elections. Critics

accused the regime of trying to eliminate even its peaceful opponents. In the elections that followed, the NDP won an overwhelming victory (Encarta, 1997).

In an effort to crack down on Islamist groups, the Mubarak government outlawed the Muslim Brotherhood in 1995. The regime also attempted to tighten control of professional associations dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood. Authorities arrested hundreds of supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood and of the Islamist-influenced *Hizb al-Amal* (Action Party, also known as Labor Party). Boosted by a drop in political violence, the tourist industry began to revive and the Egyptian economy started to reap the benefits of structural reforms launched in 1993. Economic growth increased slightly to an estimated 5.1 percent in 1996, but unemployment continued to remain high (Antisemitism, 1997).

On 17 November 1997, Abdal-Rahman's Islamic Group committed the bloody massacre of fifty-eight tourists and four Egyptians at the Temple of Hatshepsut in Luxor. The group and other Islamist terrorist organizations repeatedly targeted the tourist industry both as a symbol of western influence in Egypt and because of its importance to the economy. The Mubarak regime cited incidents of this type to justify a continuation of the state of emergency. The absence of a sizable political opposition within the government has allowed the Mubarak regime to crack down on the Islamists at will. Egyptian authorities continue to rely on the state's internal security apparatus to enforce their rule; allegations of torture and deaths in police custody, and restrictions on the media persist (Human Rights Watch, 1999).

At least rhetorically, the Mubarak regime has tended to blur the distinction between terrorist elements and the broader Islamist movement. The terrorists are in fact members of radical splinter groups that rise from a much larger constituency of disaffected individuals. In situations like this, it is necessary for the state to undertake action to address the grievances of the broader segment of society that has lost its faith in the government. Only by containing the size of disaffected groups can the state limit the revolutionary potential of radicals. While the Egyptian government has made progress in improving economic conditions, there is little sign of any political liberalization that may weaken the NDP's hold on power.

#### **F. FUTURE PROSPECTS**

How will all these factors play out? Egypt will probably successfully contain its Islamist problem for the foreseeable future. Despite appearances of single-minded repression, the Egyptian authorities have dealt with the Islamist challenge with a fair amount of cunning. While they have outlawed the Muslim Brotherhood and other religion-based political parties, authorities have allowed the creation of large numbers of secular opposition parties (Encarta, 1997). The intent was to provide a number of less militant options for people to express their discontent with the regime.

The instruments of state security by all accounts continue to be strong. It seems certain that the Egyptian authorities have in fact trampled over the broader Islamist constituency, while in pursuit of terrorists. This undoubtedly has resulted in some counterproductive effects. However, Egyptian authorities have sought to balance

repression with the selective release of Islamist political prisoners. A moderate success occurred in December 1997 when imprisoned leaders of the Islamic Group criticized their more militant comrades for the attack at Luxor and called for an unconditional cease-fire (Halperin, 31 December 1997). Shortly thereafter, between February and April 1998, the Egyptian Government quietly released 2,000 Islamist prisoners many of whom they had detained without charge (Human Rights Watch, 1999). Actions of this type by Egyptian authorities may have been part of an attempt to quell the passions within the larger Islamist movement and to provoke fissures within the Islamic Group itself.

Ultimately, the Egyptian State will endure or perish based on whether it can provide a better future for the Egyptian people. In this respect, the regime appears to be making some progress. Foreign observers have lauded Egypt for its sound macro-economic policies. The government initiated a second phase of structural economic reforms in 1993 under IMF sponsorship. The country is in the midst of a transformation from a state-dominated economy to one driven by market forces. The government has accelerated its privatization plan in an effort to reduce the economic burden of a bloated public sector. As a result, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has grown steadily during the last decade. The regime has sought to soften the blow of its privatization efforts by retaining some price controls on pharmaceuticals and other essentials. Additionally, the government has resisted efforts to devalue its currency (Country Profile, 1998). Unfortunately, many of these economic reforms may have contributed to the crippling unemployment that has plagued the country. The long-term consequences of these reforms, however, will be beneficial for most Egyptians.

The Egyptian regime has focused much attention on the community-level professional, student and religious organizations that Islamists have used for political mobilization. The action of state security agencies has curtailed domestic political violence. As a result foreign perceptions of the security situation in Egypt have improved. The tourism sector has rebounded strongly and continues to be a mainstay of the Egyptian economy. Despite restrictions on political freedom, legislative elections that include opposition groups have continued on track (Country Profile, 1998). The current regime has stayed the bold course set by Sadat of seeking peaceful co-existence with Israel. For this fact alone it will likely have to endure a difficult militant opposition for many years to come.

#### **G. CONCLUSION**

Overall, the Egyptian Government is engaging in a two-pronged effort of selective repression against Islamist groups and liberal economic reform. Arguably it has done so with significant success. Indications are that the regime understands the dynamics of Islamist mobilization and that it has acted to counter them. Egypt has sought to contain the structural opportunities that have contributed to the rise of the Islamist movement while also seeking to counter the means and motives utilized by political entrepreneurs. The regime has also sought to neutralize the specific groups responsible for terrorist attacks against the state of Egypt.



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#### **IV. THE COCAINE WAR IN COLOMBIA**

Military power plays essentially a secondary role; the decisive factor is the population, which is both the strongest force in the struggle as well as its primary objective.

Peter Paret  
(Baylis, 1987)

##### **A. INTRODUCTION**

On 30 August 1996, elements of the Southern Bloc of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), comprised of some 400 combatants, executed a daring attack against a Colombian Army company-size outpost in Las Delicias in the Putumayo Department. Among the noteworthy aspects of this attack were the use of a mock-up of the objective for guerrilla rehearsals, the infiltration of guerrillas amongst the soldiers of the army garrison, and the use of mortars and explosive breaching charges. The FARC successfully overpowered the 120-man garrison and captured half of its troops (Jane's Internal Affairs, 1999). The attack on Las Delicias was unprecedented both in its intensity and sophistication, and it marked a turning point in the four-decade history of the FARC.

How could Colombia, a liberal democratic state with, until recently, one of the best performing economies in Latin America, have produced an insurgency of the size, resilience and intensity of FARC? The question deserves consideration for the following reasons: 1) The drug activities that take place in FARC controlled areas have direct consequences on the United States in terms of public health and narcotics related crime. 2) Violence and drug activities perpetrated by FARC are increasingly having a detrimental impact on other countries in the region. 3) The humanitarian plight of many

Colombians is reaching the threshold where it will become difficult for the international community to ignore.

FARC is Latin America's largest surviving rebel army (Colombia Rebels, 19 September 1999). It is a communist insurgent organization that is the product of both unique social opportunities and the common interests of fringe groups within Colombian society. The resurgence of FARC over the last decade is best understood in terms of how it has mobilized resources in its contest with the Colombian State. While FARC is primarily a rural based insurgency, the group has mounted an important supporting effort in the cities. The group's campaign against the Government of Colombia offers insights into what role urban activities may play in future insurgent conflicts.

#### **B. ENTREPRENEURIAL SOCIALISM**

Rhetorically, the objectives of FARC have remained largely unchanged throughout its existence. The group seeks to overthrow the ruling order in Colombia and to drive out what it perceives to be the imperialist influences of the United States in Latin America (Jane's FARC, 1999). FARC still publicly clings to its Marxist-Leninist platform of massive redistribution of land and wealth, state control of natural resources, and large-scale government spending on social welfare. Additionally, FARC's predilection for attacking economic targets has placed it squarely at odds with both domestic and international business interests (Zackrisson & Bradley, May 1997).

FARC's brand of socialism has traditionally fallen flat on the Colombian political stage and has had no success as a mobilizing framework beyond the smallest

constituencies. The group's success during the current decade stems from its exploitation of a new and largely apolitical *motive* of self interest that has resonated with several dissimilar groups: migrant and landowning coca-peasants, drug trafficking organizations, and increasingly among disaffected individuals in urban areas.

In an effort to resurrect itself at the start of the 1990s, FARC expanded its participation in a number of criminal enterprises in order to compensate for a loss of external support. These economic activities have become so dominant and lucrative that they are seen as an end in themselves. This has led many outside observers to question how committed FARC really is to seizing power (Jane's Internal Affairs, 1999). Rather than seeking to change the social order in Colombia, FARC appears more interested in preserving the anarchic status quo that has allowed its criminal activities to thrive. Beyond the financial and logistical benefits of FARC's economic initiatives, it seems certain that the success of these efforts has also enhanced recruitment. Long viewed as leading a life of danger and unlimited hardship, the insurgents have doubtlessly attracted new members from among the underprivileged class, thanks in part to the success of their criminal enterprises. FARC strength is believed to have grown from a low of about 1000 in the 1980s to about 15,000 today (Sweeney, 25 March 1999). While some members of FARC's core cadre may still hold the dream of someday seizing power, it seems that many in the organization are more concerned with the short-term personal benefits they can reap from participating in criminal activities. In this respect, FARC's members win simply by prolonging the conflict.

The problem that FARC faces is that its entrepreneurial framework is exceedingly limited in its appeal. The overwhelming majority of Colombians reject FARC as an organization comprised of financial opportunists and are taken aback by the group's acts of violence (Colombia to Renew Talks, 19 April 1999). This has led some outside observers to conclude that FARC is incapable of attracting the following necessary to take power in a nation of almost 40 million inhabitants and with nearly a quarter million security personnel under arms (Penhaults, 26 July 1999). FARC's entrepreneurial framework is also vulnerable to a counter-mobilization strategy that advocates the need for law and order; such a campaign would require that security forces increase the likelihood of judicial punishment for insurgent related criminal activities.

#### **C. THE POLITICS OF INTIMIDATION: THE URBAN CELL**

Overall, the Colombian civil war is thought to have claimed 35,000 lives over the last ten years (UN Chief Urges, 2 August 1999). The conditions of violence and lawlessness in the Colombian countryside have exacerbated the traditional patterns of urban migration. In fact, Colombia is considered to have one of the largest internal refugee problems anywhere outside of Africa (Penhaul, 4 January 2000). Media accounts estimate that fully 1.5 million war refugees have moved from the countryside to the shantytowns surrounding various Colombian cities in recent years. Surprisingly, the far smaller right-wing paramilitary groups rather than the insurgency are disproportionately blamed for this phenomenon (Ambrus & Larmer, June 1999).

FARC's urban activities have played an important supporting role and have taken place in most of the cities and towns throughout the country. The Antonio Narino Urban Net, an underground faction of FARC, is active within Bogota itself (Jane's Internal Affairs, 1999). FARC's urban militias or *Columnas Urbanas* carry out underground functions and receive the support of part-time auxiliaries.

The FARC urban elements operate in cells of six people (Penhaul, 19 July 1999). Among their activities, these cells conduct a variety of acts of terrorism to include urban sniping, planting explosive devices, and disrupting industry and public services. While bombings against oil pipelines in the countryside are especially common, FARC also frequently bombs the offices of mainstream political parties and other urban targets (Penhaul, 19 July 1999; Patterns of Global Terrorism 1996/98).

The underground's campaign of subversion against municipal mayors has been especially noteworthy. In the last three years, FARC has victimized a number of local government officials; FARC elements killed 20, kidnapped 32 and threatened another 56 mayors. According to a Colombian Army report, 13.1% of the nation's municipal mayors have direct links to the insurgency. Another 44% of the mayors collaborate in some form with the insurgency. Hence, through a combination of bribery and intimidation, officials believe that FARC influences to one degree or another a staggering 57.1% of the nation's mayors. These mayors attend clandestine meetings, implement policies that are favorable to the insurgency and even divert government funds to the guerrillas (Jane's Internal Affairs, 1999). Far from insulating the population from insurgent influence, the regime has been incapable of protecting its own grassroots infrastructure.

The Colombian National Police know that elements of the FARC auxiliary recruit insurgent personnel from among displaced and lower income individuals in the urban shantytowns.<sup>1</sup> Some trade unions and church groups have a leftist inclination and may provide FARC with organizational forums. The urban auxiliary is probably an important source of intelligence for the guerrillas operating in the countryside; urban elements have easy access to the mass media and are in proximity to the many city-garrisons of the Colombian security forces. Direct contacts between urban cells and nearby guerrilla units in the field may indicate that the former support specific logistical, intelligence and tactical requirements from the latter. FARC's urban resource mobilization, however, is not critical to its survival and is secondary in importance to the activities in rural areas. Efforts to neutralize FARC in the cities must by necessity be part of a broader strategy that also addresses the problems of the countryside.

#### **D. THE HOLLOW ANDEAN STATE AND ITS TRADITIONS OF VIOLENCE**

With the exception of a period of military dictatorship from 1953 to 1957, Colombians have generally enjoyed a democratic political process in their country. Two decades of power sharing between the dominant Liberal and Conservative parties followed the period of military rule. The two parties began open and peaceful competition for power in the 1970s (Jane's Internal Affairs, 1999).

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<sup>1</sup> I base these observations on conversations with army and police officials in Barranquilla (1998); this city typifies the pattern of urban migration that has occurred as a result of violence in the Colombian countryside.

Until recently, Colombia has also enjoyed a solidly performing economy. It is one of only a handful of Latin American countries with an investment grade rating. Notably, Colombia was the sole large state in the region not to default on its debt payments during the 1980s and its economy has grown by an impressive annual 4.5 percent for the last two decades (Lapper & Thomson, 27 June 1998).

A number of left-wing insurgent groups have plagued Colombia during much of its recent history. These groups have primarily been rural based and have thrived in a vacuum caused by the absence of government security and institutional presence in the more remote areas of the country. This lack of state presence has provided FARC and other similar groups with the *opportunity* to rise to the national political stage.

FARC has its origin in a period of political violence that occurred from 1948 to 1954 (Jane's Internal Affairs, 1999). The group emerged in 1966 as the armed wing of the Colombian Communist Party (Sweeney, 25 March 1999). The 1970s and the 1980s saw alternating periods of hostility and truce between the Colombian Government and a number of Cuban-backed insurgent groups, most notably FARC and the Democratic Alliance M19. The 1980s also saw the rise of the Colombian drug cartels and early cooperation between these and insurgent groups (Encarta, 1997; USDS, 1997).

In many ways, the current period of insurgent activity can be said to have begun during the 1990 to 1994 administration of President Cesar Gaviria Trujillo. Gaviria undertook profound economic reform that had a major impact in the areas of finance, labor, and trade. His programs were largely responsible for the progressive economic growth that occurred during much of the 1990s (USDS, 1997; Jane's Economic



Indicators, 1999). Regrettably, many Colombians did not benefit from this prosperity. This was especially true in the remote frontier regions along the Putumayo and Guaviare river basins in south and eastern Colombia and in the regions along the Panamanian and Venezuelan borders. These areas were largely disconnected from the rest of the nation's economy and have provided a hotbed for insurgent activities.

Gaviria supported efforts to draft a new constitution that significantly enhanced civil rights and provided for the reintegration of insurgent elements into society (USDS, 1997; Jane's Internal Affairs, 1999). In addition to the improving domestic picture, the insurgent groups were also receptive to calls for demobilization because the end of the Cold War resulted in a loss of external support.

During this period of reconciliation, both the M19 and most of the People's Liberation Army (EPL) demobilized and became participants in Colombia's legal political life. For a time it seemed that FARC and the smaller National Liberation Army (ELN) would follow suit. However, negotiations with FARC broke down and the group's newly founded political party, the *Unidad Popular* (UP), failed to make any political inroads. FARC members refocused on invigorating their domestic sources of income: they practiced extortion, bank robbery and kidnapping, while increasingly becoming involved in providing protection to drug operations (Jane's Internal Affairs, 1999). In fact, of the 1,822 abductions reported in Colombia during 1997, authorities attributed 900 to FARC (Simpson, 10 July 1999). In the terms of the Leites and Wolf Model (see Chapter 2), FARC sought to compensate for a loss of exogenous support by mobilizing endogenous resources. Many of FARC's leaders had spent their entire adult life as

guerrilla combatants. These individuals were seemingly not willing to demobilize. Since if they did so, they would have nothing to show for their years of struggle.

Ironically, the lack of government presence that has allowed FARC criminal activities to grow also facilitated the emergence of right-wing reactionary groups. Most prominent among these are the Castano and Carranza family paramilitary groups that received private financing to protect landowners from insurgent extortion practices. These illegal groups diversified into a number of criminal enterprises, to include drug activities (Penhaul, 26 July 1999). The paramilitary organizations are responsible for a large number of abuses committed against people suspected of being sympathetic to the insurgency. In some instances, the paramilitary groups have apparently operated with the approval of individual members of the government security forces (Amnesty International, 1999).

#### **E. RURAL PEASANTS, DRUG LORDS AND CYNICAL REVOLUTIONARIES**

Through a combination of coercion and enticement, FARC managed to draw new recruits from the fringes of Colombian society. FARC developed an increasingly solid symbiotic relationship with the *Cocaleros* or coca-growing farmers. This association showed its strength when coca peasants timed mass protests to coincide with FARC military operations (Colombia's War, 31 January 1999). In some areas, these coca farmers tended to be modest landowners. In other areas, the farmers consisted of

migrants who moved to zones outside of the government's sphere of control to participate in the lucrative drug trade.<sup>2</sup>

FARC also solidified its relationship with various drug-trafficking cartels in Colombia. The guerrillas taxed all coca crops, paste production and the transportation of narcotics in and out of the regions under their control (Jane's Internal Affairs, 1999). FARC used proceeds from these and other criminal activities to buy weapons on the international black-market. According to the Colombian National Police, FARC exchanges drugs for weapons and cash with organized crime groups in Chechnya, Russia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan (Dettmer, 1997, p. 36). FARC has reportedly obtained additional weaponry from Middle East and Central American sources (Sweeney, 25 March 1999; Jane's Internal Affairs, 1999). Perhaps more alarming, reports indicate that as much as 90% of the ammunition used by FARC comes from Venezuelan Army stocks and was sold to FARC by corrupt officials in the neighboring country (Jane's FARC, 1999). FARC has experienced no apparent shortage of small arms and ammunition; indications are that support weapons, such as mortars, are in limited supply.

FARC's connections with the largely apolitical coca farmers and with the often right-wing drug cartels provided it with the *means* to contest the state for power. By facilitating an environment for drug activities, FARC was able to mobilize resources on an unprecedented scale.

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<sup>2</sup> I base my characterization of the *Cocaleros* on conversations with Colombian army and police officials in San Jose de Guaviare (1997/8) in eastern Colombia and in Leticia (1998) in southern Colombia.

The role of the coca peasantry seems exceedingly vulnerable to population control measures. Efforts to control these civilians, however, would require that the Colombian security forces reorient themselves away from large unit sweeps that seek to engage the elusive guerrillas in a decisive maneuver battle and focus instead on securing population enclaves beyond the major cities throughout the country.<sup>3</sup> One possibility, could be an adaptation of the "oil slick" method of pacification, which would encourage people to rally to government controlled enclaves to receive economic benefits and security. This study will discuss this technique in greater detail in Chapter 6.

FARC's lucky break came with the election of President Ernesto Samper in mid-1994. Samper was immediately embroiled in a major scandal when it was discovered that his political campaign had received contributions from the Cali Drug Cartel. This, in turn, resulted in the Clinton administration decertifying Colombia as a full partner in the war on drugs. De-certification resulted in reductions in US aid. Additionally, President Samper was forced to endure a difficult political trial in the Colombian Congress that eventually exonerated him of personal responsibility. The controversy weakened the Samper Administration and the Colombian Armed Forces (Sweeney, 25 March 1999).

Jorge Briceno, alias "El Mono Jojoy," commander of the FARC Southern Bloc and life-long guerrilla leader saw an opportunity in the Samper Administration's scandal. Briceno detected a lack of resolve in the Colombian regime. He correctly surmised that a

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<sup>3</sup> While the Colombian Army possesses a structure consisting of five military regional commands, it primarily relies on a strategic reserve of mobile counter-insurgency brigades to take the fight to the guerrillas. These units move from one part of the country to another and conduct broad area sweeps in search-and-destroy fashion.

politically weakened administration would have no stomach for a stepped-up insurgent campaign. At this point, Briceno executed his spectacular attack on the Colombian Army outpost in Las Delicias. Despite decades of insurgent activity, the Colombian people were severely shaken by the attack; concerned family members demanded that the Samper government take whatever action was necessary to ensure the safe release of captured government soldiers.

The terms for the release of the 60 troops from Las Delicias and another 10 held by the Southern Bloc were unprecedented. On 15 June 1997, the government agreed to the army's demilitarization of 5,000 square miles of territory in the Caqueta Department. Almost immediately, Army commanders sought to renege on the agreement (Jane's Internal Affairs, 1999). A series of bloody setbacks for the government soon followed. The most significant was a battle near the Caguan River in the Caqueta Department that started on 26 February 1998. Reportedly the battle took place when an informant led elements of an elite, all-volunteer, counter-insurgency brigade to the site of a base camp that contained 600 guerrillas from the Southern Bloc. To their dismay, the soldiers fell into a sophisticated zone ambush. The three days of fighting that followed resulted in the death of 80 soldiers and the capture of 43 (Sweeney, 25 March 1999). While the government troops inflicted severe casualties on the guerrillas, the Samper administration felt it could not tolerate these losses. During the additional negotiations that followed, the Colombian Government seemed to be bent on achieving peace at all cost.

The 70-year old founder and senior commander of FARC, Pedro Antonio Marin, alias Manuel Maralunda Velez, retained the leadership of the insurgent organization

during its negotiations with the government (Rebel Leaders, 7 July 1999; *Se Reanuda Contacto*, 12 September 1999; *Ahora Toca*, 28 December 1999). However, Briceno clearly rose in prominence as a result of his successes and many observers now see him as directing the FARC's military campaign (Jane's Internal Affairs, 1999). Throughout its history, FARC's tactical operations have sought to avoid insurgent casualties. Most of FARC's strikes fell into the category of harassment attacks. Briceno's doctrine seems to be one that accepts limited casualties in order to inflict maximum pain and exert political leverage on the regime. Briceno has shown a willingness to mass several hundred guerrillas to attain decisive results at a time and place of his choosing.

The FARC's Eastern Bloc appeared to apply Briceno's doctrine when it massed several hundred guerrillas to over-run remote army and police outposts in Miraflores and Mitu in August and November 1998. The attack on the outpost in Mitu and subsequent ambush of a relief column resulted in the death of over one hundred police and soldiers (Sweeney, 1999; Jane's FARC, 1999). The spectacular FARC tactical successes in the Southern and Eastern Bloc areas of operations occurred against a backdrop of rising low-level guerrilla actions throughout the country. Some have speculated that recent FARC successes must be attributable to a new external source of advisory support. It seems entirely possible, however, that FARC's tactics have been internally conceived to exploit the political and military conditions that presently exist within Colombia.

## F. FUTURE PROSPECTS

To date, 1999 can easily be seen as the Colombian Government's darkest hour in its decades long civil war. The current administration of President Andres Pastrana has, in error, embraced the policy of accommodation initiated by President Samper. Critics have rightfully charged that Pastrana has sought "peace at all costs." The Colombian government's concessions to FARC have only emboldened the insurgents. Pastrana recognized an expanded demilitarized zone of 16,216 square miles in December 1998 (Sweeney, 1999; Amnesty International, 1999). FARC has used this zone in Caqueta as an operations base for attacks; no longer required to operate in a clandestine manner, drug activities in the demilitarized safe haven have reached new heights (*FARC Aprovechan*, 27 July 1999). The United States drug czar Barry McCaffrey (August, 1999) estimates that 30% of the landmass in Caqueta and neighboring Putumayo is now growing coca.

The fact that the Pastrana Administration has gone ahead with negotiations even without a prior cease fire agreement from the rebels highlights its lack of resolve (Penhaul, 26 July 1999). The political outlook is further complicated by the deterioration of what had been a solid economy; deficit spending during the Samper Administration weakened the government's ability to cope with the situation (Jane's Economic Indicators, 1999). A five-percent decline of Colombia's GNP made 1999 the worst year on record for the nation's economy. Recession and government austerity measures have led to a soaring 20% unemployment rate that was acutely felt in urban areas and that FARC has exploited politically (Colombian Strike, 31 August 1999; *Colombia Tuvo*, 28 December 1999). During the summer of 1999, a full year after assuming office, President

Pastrana had an approval rating of only 21% for his handling of both the economy and the insurgency (Colombia's Pastrana, 1 August 1999). Defense Minister Rodrigo Lloreda resigned in protest over Pastrana's management of the peace process (Penhaul, 15 August 1999).

A nationwide series of attacks in July and December of 1999 may have demonstrated the limits of the Briceno Doctrine. Government forces repelled these attacks, which may have resulted in the deaths of several hundred guerrillas and government troops. FARC had hoped these actions would strengthen its hand during ongoing negotiations (Penhaults, 19 July 1999 & 20 December 1999). But, despite these modest government successes, the outlook continues to be bleak.

The implications of the war in Colombia for the United States are significant. FARC-perpetrated violence has already sporadically spilled over to most of Colombia's neighboring countries to include: Brazil, Ecuador, Panama, and Venezuela. Additionally, FARC's criminal activities have had an impact well beyond the borders of Colombia. The explosion in drug production has had a measurable social impact on every major city in the US. International business interests are challenged by the conditions of lawlessness within Colombia. American citizens and other foreigners have already been abducted and executed by FARC in Colombia (Novak, 19 April 1999). Finally, the plight of the Colombian people themselves is a concern that the US may find increasingly difficult to ignore.

Earlier this year, the Clinton Administration proposed \$1.3 billion in military aid to assist the Colombian government's counter-narcotics effort over the next two years (de



Bendern, 9 February 2000). The purpose of the aid was not to combat the insurgency. The centerpiece of the package included 30 Blackhawk and 33 Huey helicopters and funds to train and equip anti-drug units (Schmitt, 31 March 2000). As the aid proposal was under review in February, Colombian chief negotiator Victor Ricardo held talks with FARC representative Raul Reyes in Stockholm, Sweden. Reportedly, both sides studied the Swedish model of economic and social development as part of a possible peace plan (de Bendern, 7 February 2000). But, a breakthrough seemed very unlikely, and, in the meantime, violence has continued unabated.

The single most disturbing aspect of the war is the Colombian Government's failure to develop any counter-insurgency framework whatsoever. Combined training exercises with US forces have enhanced the tactical proficiency of several individual Colombian units. Should the United States decide to directly support the Colombian Government against the insurgency, the situation would require a national and regional level advisory effort. The Colombian National Police, in particular, have demonstrated the ability for meticulous intelligence work that characterized their successful campaigns against the Medellin and Cali drug cartels. What is needed is a national level campaign plan that harnesses the full potential of the Colombian security forces as part of an integrated counter-insurgency effort; such an endeavor would have to counteract the means, motives and opportunities seized by the insurgency.

## **G. CONCLUSION**

FARC is the product of both unique social opportunities and the common interests of fringe groups within Colombian society. Urban activities represent an important supporting effort for FARC; they are not, however, vital to the groups continued existence. While the overwhelming majority of Colombians reject FARC's socialist model as an alternative to their elected government, the insurgents have the means at their disposal to sustain themselves indefinitely. While some members may still aspire to attain FARC's political objectives, the organization appears focused on the short-term benefits it can draw from participating in criminal activities. In this regard, many insurgents may believe that they win simply by prolonging the conflict.

The relationship between FARC and its apolitical auxiliary of coca farmers is largely responsible for the insurgency's ability to mobilize an unprecedented amount of financial resources. This relationship, however, also represents a strategic vulnerability that is susceptible to government counter-action.

FARC's effective leadership has significantly enhanced the group's leverage and political influence. It has also contributed to a deteriorating situation that, like Kosovo and East Timor, may soon require the United States and the international community to take action.

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## **V. THE FIRST CHECHEN WAR**

The harder you hit them, the longer they will remain quiet afterwards.

Russian General M.D. Skobelev 1843-1882  
(Porch, 1997)

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

During the early morning hours of 31 December 1994, a force of some 6,000 Russian troops in armored personnel carriers, tanks and other vehicles entered the city of Grozny, capital of the renegade republic of Chechnya. A thick cloud of black smoke rose from the burning refineries on the outskirts of town. The impending arrival of the Russian troops was foretold by the thundering noise of jet fighters and by the concussion of artillery rounds and bombs that struck various buildings throughout the city. Spearheaded by elements of the 131<sup>st</sup> Maikop Brigade, one of the Russian columns advanced to its initial march objective with surprising ease and was ordered to continue towards the center of the city. By early afternoon, lead vehicles of the brigade occupied the city's railway station directly facing the Presidential Palace. Moving through the shadows, small teams of Chechen fighters took positions in the various buildings surrounding the railway station. The Chechens informed the Russians by means of a radio that they were surrounded and demanded their surrender. When the Russians refused, a hail of small arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades slammed into the Russian forces (Gall & de Waal, 1998, p. 1-6). Thus began one of the bloodiest urban battles of the late twentieth century. A battle that, ironically, was to repeat itself five years later when Russia again tried to reassert its control over the breakaway republic of Chechnya.

How could the members of a small ethnic minority within the Russian Federation have defeated an army that, until recently, many observers considered one of the most powerful on earth? The question is worth considering because the world has seen the forces of ethnic fragmentation unleashed with greater frequency in the aftermath of the Cold War, and this trend is likely to produce still more conflicts in the future.

While the war in Chechnya may appear to be an imperfect example of insurgency, the conflict possesses three common characteristics of insurgent conflicts discussed in the first chapter: 1) The Chechen war is essentially a violent struggle for political power between an established regime and a challenger. 2) The challenger relies on a support infrastructure within the population. 3) The conflict is primarily a test of political and psychological will, rather than a straightforward contest between combatants. The war in Chechnya, however, did not proceed according to the evolutionary phases that many attribute to insurgencies. Nor has the conflict resulted from the type of protracted subversion and gradual erosion of a constituted government's power that are perhaps most defining of insurgency. Nevertheless, Chechnya is an insightful case study because it illustrates many of the qualities of insurgency that are increasingly characteristic of contemporary conflicts. The Chechen War also presents an extreme example of the type of urban quagmire that may confront counterinsurgency forces in the future.

While many observers have dissected the Chechens' tactics to account for their success, this chapter will argue that the outcome of the First Chechen War was predominantly the result of unique political dynamics within Russia and of the strength of the Chechen mobilization process. The rise and faltering existence of an independent

Chechnya is the product of both the collapse of the Soviet Union and the unique history and character of the Chechen people. Chechnya's overt drive towards independence follows an extended pre-conflict period in which separatist sentiment simmered within the republic.

## **B. CLAN RIVALRIES AND ETHNIC SOLIDARITY**

For centuries, clans have formed the most important unit of social organization in Chechnya and among other peoples in the North Caucasus. A clan normally consists of the population from one to three villages and derives its lineage paternally. Women marry outside their clan. Clans often have their own cemeteries, elder councils and court justices. There are about 165 clans in Chechnya and their size varies significantly. The clans select their leaders through elections. Political unity above the clan level has only come about when foreign invaders have imposed it by force. Imam Shamil, a Dagestani warrior who fought against Russia's occupation of the region in the mid-nineteenth century, accounts for an exception to this rule (Smeets & Wesselink, 11 December 1995).

Following his defeat during the bloody siege at Akhulgo, Shamil was asked to lead the Chechens in rebellion against Russia's brutal occupation. By the mid-1840s, Shamil succeeded in creating a mini-state with its own tax and legal system (Gall & de Waal, 1998, p. 42, 48). As a Dagestani, Shamil was able to rise above clan rivalries to unite the Chechen people in resistance against Russia. Under his leadership, the Chechens became masters of the raid and ambush and attained noteworthy successes:

...Shamil became expert at allowing Russians to meander through valleys, sacking town after deserted town, and then cutting them to ribbons when they attempted to return to base....Shamil's greatest triumph, however, came in 1845 as Prince Vorontsov's "flying"

column withdrew through the Chechnian forests towards his base. The Russians were able to cover only 30 miles in one week, in the process abandoning baggage and wounded and losing 4,000 men and 200 officers, including three generals, to Shamil's ambush (Porch, 1997, p. 90).

The Russians eventually captured Shamil in 1859 bringing the early Chechen state to an end.

Following the October Revolution, a tense truce emerged between the Bolshevik authorities in Moscow and the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus, with the latter eventually gaining a fair amount of autonomy. Towards the end of World War II, however, Stalin deported the entire Chechen population to Kazakhstan. Of the half million people that were sent into exile in 1944, at least 100,000 died of sickness and hunger during the first two years (Gall & de Waal, 1998, p. 56).

A decade later, the Chechens began to return from exile in Central Asia with their clan organization and Islamic traditions strengthened by the ordeal. Even to this day, clan membership rather than ideological affinity determine Chechen political loyalties. Both legitimate and criminal entrepreneurial activities often work along clan lines. It was not uncommon, for example, for individuals who gained positions in the local government bureaucracy to distribute jobs and other favors according to clan obligations. Traditionally, the clans have been in steep competition and at times have engaged in blood feuds with each other. The rise of Dzhokhar Dudayev as the first president of a separate Chechen republic in 1991 was only possible because he belonged to a relatively unimportant clan, and the more influential clans did not consider him a threat. Furthermore, as a career officer in the Soviet Air Force who had spent most of his adult life outside of Chechnya, he was seen as someone who was largely outside the traditional

clan rivalries. Nevertheless, during his term in office, both Dudayev and his opponents found it necessary to seek the support of the councils of clan elders (Smeets & Wesselink, 11 December 1995). The influence of the clans was apparently less significant with urban Chechens and among those who, like Dudayev, had spent many years living apart from their own people (Lieven, 1998, p. 342).

While the clans were frequently in competition with each other, they nevertheless preserved the common ethnic identity and history of the Chechen people. Subsequent generations learned to revere their heritage of resistance under Imam Shamil and of suffering during the exile in Kazakhstan. In this manner, the clans acted as a source of indoctrination and were uniquely positioned to mobilize their members in resistance to Russia. The clans constituted the organizational *means* that allowed the Chechens to challenge Moscow's rule over the republic following the collapse of the Soviet Union. While the importance of the clans may have declined as the Chechen fighters became progressively regularized into a conventional type force, the clans nevertheless account for much of the political and psychological resilience on the Chechen side.

### **C. THE CHECHEN WARRIOR MYTHOLOGY**

Despite Soviet efforts to revise history, the legacy of resistance to outside rule was kept alive within the culture of the Chechen clans. The exploits of distant ancestors in the Caucasus Wars were a source of pride for many Chechens. Individuals learned early in life to value personal courage, clan loyalty and expertise in warfare and weaponry (Finch, June 1997).



Within this context, a warrior mythology flourished among the Chechen people and reached its zenith during the war in 1995. This mythology demanded individual self-sacrifice and ferocious resistance to outside oppressors, even in the face of overwhelming odds. A local slogan proclaimed that a Chechen fighter was worth one Russian tank or a hundred Russian soldiers. As a result of the conflict with Moscow, the warrior myth underwent a process of radicalization during the 1990s. Chechens have traditionally led rather secular lives. Within some circles, however, competing clan leaders began to stage appeals to Islam in order to obtain greater political legitimacy. Many observers saw the influence of Islam in neighboring Dagestan as a force of moderation and tolerance. In contrast, Islam in Chechnya seemed to intensify the pre-existing warrior ethos, which was often non-compromising and self-destructive. This trend was further complicated at the end of the war by the influence of Wahhabite Islamic Fundamentalism, which had spread throughout the region with the help of supporters in the Persian Gulf, Pakistan and Afghanistan, including notorious terrorist Osama Bin Laden. While the warrior mythology allowed clan members to collaborate against the Russians, it also exacerbated criminal rivalries. As the legitimate economy collapsed, competition among the clans grew in areas that ranged from the tapping of petroleum pipelines, to kidnapping for ransom and counterfeiting (Ware, 8 November 1999).

The radicalization of the warrior ethos and the eventual rise of Islamist factions are best understood in terms of the pressures from Russia that confronted the Chechen people. Compromising on independence from Moscow seemed impossible in the face of Russia's brutality. Extreme times seemed to call for extreme leaders: individuals who

most passionately embodied the Chechen ideals as warriors and as Muslims were, in some instances, more likely to gain recognition. Islam had long been linked to the Chechen sense of identity. Furthermore, it seems certain that the Chechens drew inspiration from the Afghan holy war against Russia; they undoubtedly sought to replicate the zeal of the freedom fighters in the earlier conflict.

The warrior mythology, with its obligations of resistance and self-sacrifice, provided the primary *motive* for the Chechen fighters and their supporters to reject Moscow's rule: the Chechens' mythology most clearly explains their actions and worldview. The nurturing of this mythology within the clans during decades of Russian and Soviet rule sowed the seeds of the conflict in the 1990s. Ironically, the same ethnic mythology that primed the Chechen people to tenaciously fight the Russians would also pose an insurmountable obstacle to peaceful inter-clan collaboration and the formation of an independent state in the aftermath of the First Chechen War. There is no question that many Chechens desired to form an independent state of their own. Strictly speaking, however, the dominant influence in Chechnya was not nationalism, which would have demanded the subordination of clan criminal and political interests for the sake of nationalist aspirations.

#### **D. THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET EMPIRE**

In response to low level demonstrations on various ethnic issues, Soviet authorities in 1989 approved the appointment of Duko Zavgayev as First Secretary of the Chechen-Ingush Communist Party. Zavgayev was the first ethnic Chechen to hold this

position and in the Soviet parliamentary elections that followed later that year, Zavgayev succeeded in seating several of his followers. In November of 1990, the open expression of Chechen desires for autonomy reached new heights with the formation of the Chechen National Congress. Impressed with his credentials as a major general in the Soviet Air Force and with his lack of entanglements in clan rivalries, delegates to the congress elected Dudayev as chairman of their Executive Committee and commander of the newly formed Chechen National Guard. Later the following year, the National Congress called for the dissolution of the communist dominated Chechen-Ingush Supreme Soviet. Zavgayev was preparing to move against the National Congress when Communist Party hard-liners staged a coup to oust Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow in August of 1991 (Lieven, 1998, p.57).

Dudayev exploited the situation in the Russian capital. He denounced the communist plotters and called for mass demonstrations and strikes to protest against the coup. In the confusion that followed, armed Chechens in Grozny occupied official buildings, radio and television stations, and eventually the Supreme Soviet itself. Zavgayev fled the republic, the Supreme Soviet dissolved, and Ingushetia proclaimed itself separate from Chechnya (Lieven, 1998, p.60).

On 27 October 1991, Dudayev held presidential and parliamentary elections. Dudayev won 85 per cent of the presidential vote and separatist groups captured all of the parliamentary seats. On 2 November, the Chechen parliament defied President Boris Yeltsin and declared full independence from Russia. Yeltsin imposed a state of emergency in Chechnya and dispatched 600 Interior Ministry troops. In the first of a

series of military humiliations, armed Chechens surrounded the Russian troops as they arrived at the airport. The Russian Supreme Soviet later denounced Yeltsin's state of emergency and agreed to the withdrawal of the 600 troops. The Russian soldiers were later loaded on buses and escorted out of the republic by members of the Chechen National Guard. In the months that followed, armed Chechens succeeded in coercing the withdrawal of Soviet and Russian troops garrisoned throughout the republic. The Chechens often required that Moscow's troops barter their weapons in exchange for safe passage back to Russia. The departure of federal troops provided a massive infusion of weapons to the Chechen separatist forces (Lieven, 1998, p.63).

The coup attempt in Moscow set in motion a series of events that eventually resulted in the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russian president Boris Yeltsin played a key role in defeating the communist hard-liners' coup attempt. He later directed efforts to dismantle the communist governing apparatus. In December of 1991, he signed the Byelovezhskaya Pushcha agreement with the presidents of Ukraine and Belarus, which dissolved the Soviet Union and replaced it with the more loosely constituted Commonwealth of Independent States (Encarta, 1997; Lieven, 1998, p.15). It was in the chaos of this period that the Chechen separatists found the *opportunity* to rebel against Moscow's rule.

As dramatic as events were in the latter half of 1991, they by no means resolved the status of Chechnya. In the years that followed the Chechen declaration of independence, a number of political crises distracted the authorities in Moscow from paying much attention to the situation in the republic (Gall & de Waal, 1998, p. 20):

Chechnya was not so much an independent country as a twilight zone, neither inside Russia nor outside it. The republic had definitely fallen out of the Russian political space. Nameplates outside ministries told you [that] you were now in the "Noxchijn Respublika" and there was not a Russian flag or symbol to be seen. From the summer of 1992 there were no Russian troops in the republic - something that was not true of any other part of the former Soviet empire, even East Germany, at the time.

On 28 September 1993, Moscow had its most significant crisis when troops loyal to Yeltsin stormed the Russian Parliament where hard-line communists and nationalists were holed-up after voting to impeach the Russian president (Encarta, 1997).

Within Chechnya, Dudayev ruled in an erratic and authoritarian manner; soon opposition elements began to emerge. In mid-1993, Dudayev dissolved the Chechen Parliament, Town Assembly and Constitutional Court. Under his rule, the republic rapidly became a criminal safe-haven and acted as a major conduit of black market goods for the entire former Soviet Union (Gall & de Waal, 1998, p. 119, 125). Moscow made various attempts to support elements that might overthrow the Chechen President. Opposition forces, eventually joined by Russian troops, launched a failed clandestine attack on Grozny on 26 November 1994. A few days later, President Yeltsin issued an ultimatum for Chechnya to disarm and surrender. The government in Grozny refused. The stage was thus set for a massive conventional invasion of the renegade republic (The First Bloody Battle, 22 October 1999).

#### **E. WAR IN THE STREETS AND IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**

On 11 December 1994, 40,000 Russian troops, organized in massive columns, converged on Chechnya from three directions. Two individual Chechens, above all, stood out during the ensuing fight to resist the Russian invasion. They were Aslan

Maskhadov, the Chechen Chief of Staff, and Shamil Basayev, the commander of the seasoned "Abkhaz Battalion" that formed the cornerstone of the Chechen National Guard. Maskhadov was a clean-cut former Soviet colonel who was pragmatic, disciplined and cool under pressure. Basayev, on the other hand, was impulsive, reckless and non-compromising. In 1991, Basayev hijacked a passenger plane in Mineralnye Vody to protest Russian policy towards Chechnya. He is thought to have participated in earlier fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh and in the breakaway region of Abkhazia. Basayev and his followers fought in the tradition of Islamist fighters (Finch, June 1997; Gall & de Waal, 1998, p.188, 262). Both Maskhadov and Basayev became symbols of the dual character of the Chechen separatist movement.

Rebels armed with rocket-propelled grenades and assault rifles operated in small guerrilla units and strongly contested the Russian advance into Chechnya. Nevertheless, by New Year's Eve, the Russian forces stood on the edges of Grozny. Moscow ordered a massive bombardment of the Chechen capital, and hundreds of tanks and other vehicles rolled into the city. Yet, despite this overwhelming show of force, the Russian operation soon turned into a catastrophe. Chechen fighters learned to knock out the lead tank in a column in order to trap follow-on forces in the narrow city streets. Small hunter-killer teams would then swarm on the immobilized Russian units (The First Bloody Battle, 22 October 1999). The Chechens were able to use the urban terrain as an equalizer against the vastly superior Russian forces. They also appear to have benefited from the use of interior lines of communication to shift their forces against the unsynchronized Russian advances.

Hundreds of Moscow's troops are thought to have died in the battle at Grozny's rail station. After three days of fighting and the loss of some 2,000 troops throughout the city, the federal forces withdrew in failure. The Russians reorganized and reinforced their forces and again launched ferocious bombing raids against the city. Advancing in a more methodical manner, the Russians seized the embattled Chechen presidential palace on 19 January 1995 (The First Bloody Battle, 22 October 1999).

On 7 March, Russian forces finally occupied the remaining parts of Grozny. In the process, they had completely destroyed the city and inflicted an estimated 27,000 civilian casualties. The subsequent occupation of the Chechen capital was equally brutal and subjected the local inhabitants to mindless acts of violence. Chechen fighters continued to resist outside of Grozny. They often moved among the civilians and inevitably endangered the lives of their own people. After the fall of Grozny, many observers argued that the rebels would conduct guerrilla operations from the mountains in the south of Chechnya. In reality, the Chechens defended various towns and villages in a rather conventional manner. Maskhadov defended this strategy, saying that because of Chechnya's small territory, it was the only way to keep the Russians from sweeping through the country in a matter of days. In the months that followed, most of the Chechen forces were, in fact, driven into the mountains where they did engage in guerrilla operations (Gall & de Waal, 1998, p.227, 233, 247).

One man who did not fall back into the mountains was Shamil Basayev who, with 150 fighters, staged a controversial raid against the town of Budyonnovsk, 100 miles deep in Russian territory. When cornered by Russian security forces, Basayev seized several

hundred hostages, including women and children, and barricaded himself in a town hospital. During tense negotiations with Russian authorities, Basayev went so far as to execute twelve of his hostages. Maskhadov, who had not sanctioned the operation, interceded in an effort to resolve the crisis. After a failed attempt to storm the hospital with Russian Special Forces, Prime Minister Chernomyrdin also became directly involved in negotiations. What emerged was not only a resolution to the hostage barricade, but also a cease-fire for the entire Chechen war and the start of peace talks under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) (de Waal, 29 September 1999; Gall & de Waal, 1998, p.258).

#### **F. RUSSIAN CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

The period of negotiations that followed as a result of Chernomyrdin's cease-fire held the greatest promise for the peaceful resolution of the Chechen conflict. Moscow, however, thoroughly foiled this opportunity. Some observers contend that while Russia was a struggling democracy, the post-Soviet regime lacked the basic preconditions for dialogue-based conflict resolution. In this sense, Moscow was plagued by an imperial legacy that drove officials to act arrogantly and to be predisposed towards the use of excessive force. An atmosphere of insincerity and threat characterized the attempts of Russian mediators to negotiate a peaceful settlement with the Chechens (Finch, August 1998 p.6; Krag, 18 October 1999). Dudayev's negotiating tactics certainly did not contribute to the process.



For several months Maskhadov and Russian Lieutenant-General Anatoly Romanov, the commander of Russian troops in Chechnya, enjoyed a period of extraordinary cooperation. However, the political negotiations between the two sides were extremely tense. Gradually, the hawkish perspective began to reassert itself within the Kremlin. Russian forces resumed the bombardment of Chechen villages in the south. In Grozny, a series of car bombings, apparently against Russian officials, rocked the city. Hard line elements within the Russian security forces and pro-Moscow Chechens under Zavgayev, the former communist leader, may have played a key role in these events and in prompting Moscow to again use force. The final collapse of the peace process occurred in December 1995 when the Kremlin attempted to orchestrate elections to replace Dudayev with Zavgayev as the new president of Chechnya (Gall & de Waal, 1998, p.282)

With the renewal of hostilities, the Chechens quickly took the offensive with a thoroughly reorganized force. However, they were mindful of the need for a political settlement. Dudayev attempted to reinstate negotiations and tried to coordinate a meeting with Yeltsin. The Russian leader appeared to be cooperative, but Yeltsin had already ordered the assassination of the Chechen president. In this regard, Russian troops achieved a breakthrough when they triangulated the signal from Dudayev's satellite phone and directed a salvo of artillery fire at his location. The ensuing explosion killed Dudayev instantly. The Chechens, however, were undeterred by the loss of their leader and continued to resist. On 16 August 1996, 1500 fighters led by Shamil Basayev began a massive infiltration back into Grozny that was now guarded by over 12,000 Russian

troops. Within hours the Chechens laid siege to the central government compound and a number of secondary outposts throughout the city. In a coup of psychological leverage, the Chechens persuaded a number of trapped Russian outposts to surrender. The use of Russian fire support and the unsynchronized commitment of relief columns had little effect. With the situation rapidly unraveling, Yeltsin designated his new Security Chief, Alexander Lebed, as presidential envoy to Chechnya and assigned him the seemingly impossible task of salvaging Moscow's position. Lebed traveled to war-torn Chechnya to meet with Maskhadov. The two men set in motion a process that resulted in a cease-fire that effectively ended the First Chechen War. The Chechens agreed to postpone a decision on independence until the year 2001 and were left largely in control of the republic (Gall & de Waal, 1998, p.318, 331, 346, 371).

Few observers saw the end of the war in Chechnya as anything but a Russian defeat. While Moscow's forces made several mistakes and the Chechens did many things well, it would be an error to analyze the results of the conflict in purely military terms. Ultimately, Russia failed to persevere because it did not adequately deal with the political and psychological dynamics of the conflict: an asymmetry of will existed between the Chechens, who wanted independence, and the Russians, who wanted to preserve Chechnya within the federation. There was never any doubt that, in an abstract sense, Moscow was more powerful and *could* win, but would the Russians be willing to pay the price to hold on to Chechnya? Those leaders in Moscow, like Defense Minister Grachev, who thought an invasion of Chechnya would be a "bloodless Blitzkrieg," were sadly mistaken (Finch, August 1998, p.4). These officials failed to appreciate the powerful

motives for resistance and the organizational means the Chechens could draw upon to counter an external aggression.

The Russians fought for a cause they generally did not value and in the midst of a hostile population. While Moscow's troops operated with a sense of being always under siege, the Chechens moved about amongst a supportive citizenry. The Russians also failed to recognize how the battleground of Grozny was ideally suited to the lightly equipped Chechen fighters who could exploit the urban terrain to inflict severe casualties on Moscow's forces. Furthermore, the Kremlin did not appreciate how the excessive use of force would unify the previously fractured Chechens and would alienate many among the civilian population who favored a political accommodation with Moscow. Russian atrocities were especially counterproductive:

In the conflict with the secessionist Republic of Chechnya, Russian forces continued to commit numerous, serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Russian forces used indiscriminate and excessive force without regard for the presence of noncombatants, prevented civilians from evacuating areas of imminent danger, blocked humanitarian assistance from reaching civilians in need, mistreated detainees who may or may not have had links with separatist forces, and tolerated incidents involving groups of federal soldiers engaging in murder, rape, assault, extortion and theft (Human Rights, 30 January 1997).

## **G. FUTURE PROSPECTS**

At the time of this writing, Russia and Chechnya are fully engaged in a second Chechen war. This current conflict reflects many of the same dynamics that shaped the first war. Clearly, Shamil Basayev embodies the spirit of the Chechen warrior in the eyes of the outside world and of many of his countrymen. Perhaps, in an effort to reclaim the Islamic state of Imam Shamil, Basayev triggered the current round of fighting by leading a group of his followers into neighboring Dagestan. Some observers contend that

Basayev could not accept peace with Russia after the death of eleven family members during a bombing raid of his village in the earlier Chechen conflict (de Waal, 29 September 1999). The Russians, true to their own character and history, responded with a brutal and overwhelming invasion of Chechnya. One can only wonder if Maskhadov, now president of the republic, might have again failed to control the impulsive Basayev. If history is any guide, we can safely say that we have not seen the end of resistance among the Chechen people.

## **H. CONCLUSION**

The outcome of the First Chechen War was the result of unique political dynamics in Russia and of the strength of the Chechen mobilization process. The Chechens nurtured separatist aspirations over centuries during an extended pre-conflict period. The strength of the clan social structure provided the Chechen fighters with the organizational means to resist Moscow's efforts to subjugate the separatist republic. Similarly, these clans perpetuated a warrior mythology amongst the Chechen people that galvanized them in the face of external aggression and provided them with the motives to fight Russia, even in the face of overwhelming odds. Ultimately, the collapse of the Soviet Union provided the Chechens with the opportunity to break away from Moscow's rule.

The Kremlin's response towards the crisis shows that Russia has not fully adopted the dialogue-methods of conflict resolution that are generally embraced by democratic nations. Russia is still influenced by her imperial past and remains prone towards the reactionary use of brutal violence to quell dissent within her borders.

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## **VI. GENERAL LESSONS FOR COUNTERINSURGENCY**

For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill. Thus, what is of supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy.

Sun Tzu circa 500 B.C.  
(Griffith, 1963)

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to draw lessons from the case studies that may guide the employment of SOF in future insurgent conflicts, giving special consideration to the problems in urban areas. The previous chapters have illustrated how insurgent groups can exploit *opportunity*, *means* and *motives* to mobilize resources on their behalf and to chart a tactical path of violent confrontation with a regime. This study has attempted to show how the insurgent mobilization process occurs within the population itself. Individuals tasked with combating insurgent violence must view the problem within its broader political context. They must be able to discern the loyalties and grievances of various sectors of the citizenry. A failure to do so may result in a campaign that merely reacts to insurgent violence without addressing the underlying causes of the problem (i.e. opportunity & motives) and without confronting the full depth of the insurgent organizational structure within the population (i.e. means).

### **B. THE NATURE OF INSURGENT CONFLICTS**

Authors in recent years have identified a growing preponderance of conflicts outside the conventional model. John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt (1997) highlight the growing irregular character of warfare with the increasing participation of non-state actors

(p. 2). Bevin Alexander (1995) claims that future adversaries are likely to resort to guerrilla warfare in order to circumvent America's strength in high-tech military force. Thomas Adams (1998) argues that Unconventional Warfare is the new norm of conflict, that it occurs in the midst of a civilian population and is "primarily about politics, but with a significant violence component above the level of ordinary criminality" (p. 22, 24). While acknowledging that conventional wars will continue to be a problem, Adams highlights the growing pervasiveness of unconventional war.

This thesis might seem to suggest that many irregular conflicts in the post-Cold War period fit the profile of insurgencies. The reason for this is that the three contemporary cases studies illustrate many of the traditional dynamics and characteristics of insurgencies: 1) These conflicts consist of a struggle for political power between an existing state regime and a domestic challenger to its authority. 2) The challenger, or counter-state, obtains support through a human infrastructure within the civilian population that provides intelligence, recruitment, logistics, economic financing, political mobilization and other resources necessary for the conduct of an armed struggle. 3) The straightforward application of military force does not determine the outcome of these conflicts; rather, they are primarily the product of political and psychological dynamics. Alternately, the Chechnya example does not illustrate the pattern of gradual erosion of constituted government's authority that might be most defining of an insurgency.

Conventional wars are generally resolved through the use of military force. States generally succeed in conventional conflicts by securing victory in battle; they win by defeating the military forces of an adversarial nation-state. A conventional military

approach, however, fails to address the political, economic and social conditions that prompt individuals and groups to participate in an insurgent movement. Conventional war fighting also fails to see and appropriately counter the broader human infrastructure that supports an insurgent campaign.

Insurgencies, and the broader category of unconventional conflicts, have a center of gravity that is political and psychological in nature. The Brazilian urban terrorist, Carlos Marighella, best captured this characteristic when he argued that an insurgency attained success by gaining popular support while at the same time creating a "climate of collapse" within the existing regime. Insurgent tactical actions are important in psychological and political, rather than in military terms. Tactical operations seek to highlight the impotence of the security forces and to discredit the government that employs them (Baylis, 1987, p. 221).

Notwithstanding Mao's prescription for a war of maneuver in the final phase of an insurgency, an existing regime does not generally fall by force of arms. Rather, the collapse of a state tends to occur in the form of a psychological and political implosion. The final days in power of Batista in Cuba, and of the Shah of Iran would seem to illustrate this dynamic. Similarly, Russia's performance in the First Chechen War is best understood not on military grounds alone, but also in terms of the mindset of the Kremlin's leadership and its troops in the field, and in terms of the will of the Russian people. As Aslan Maskhadov stated, "We came to the conclusion that Russia will of course be able to crush Chechnya if it wants to" (Gall & de Waal, 1998, p. 347). The Chechen leader recognized that in terms of absolute military capabilities he was no match



for the Russians. Rather, he operated within a space created by the asymmetry of will. Tactical actions in insurgent conflicts are less important for their concrete results and more important for how they shape the political and psychological undercurrents of a conflict. A counterinsurgency campaign must not only be fought on the military plane, but also on a psychological and political level.

While popular support plays a key and often decisive role, one should not view an insurgent conflict as a popularity contest. Individuals may or may not participate in an insurgency based on a number of positive and negative incentives. Furthermore, small, but well organized constituencies can prove to be decisive. The intensity and degree of mobilization of insurgent supporters may be every bit as important as their total numbers within the population. The insurgencies in Egypt and Colombia have existed for decades with the backing of small fringes within the population. Alternately, the Chechen fighters have failed to translate their broad support within the republic into a definitive resolution of the separatist issue; today, that support may be wavering in favor of a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The outcome of an insurgent conflict often appears to be the result of a process of psychological and political attrition. The support of even a small segment of the population allows the insurgents to sustain themselves and to continue their struggle. Whereas conventional wars are primarily a test of military and economic strength, insurgent conflicts are mostly a contest of political and psychological endurance.

### C. THE PRIMACY OF POLICY

The three case studies in the previous chapters highlight the critical role of government policy in counterinsurgency efforts. In Egypt, the Mubarak government's efforts to transition from a state-directed to a free market economy and the adoption of tough (most would say excessive) internal security measures are examples of state policies that effectively limited the Islamist movement's appeal and operating space. In Colombia, the government's decision to seek "peace at all cost" allowed the rebels to secure unprecedented concessions in the form of a vast demilitarized zone that they used as a guerrilla sanctuary and for the production of illegal narcotics. During the Chechen crisis of the mid-1990s, Moscow's policies, which alternated between negotiations and the use of excessive force, were counter-productive to a satisfactory resolution of the conflict. The Kremlin's approach unified and radicalized the Chechen separatist movement. In each of the three cases, government policies shaped the course of events and provided the context for military and state security operations. Local initiatives and tactical successes can never properly compensate for poorly conceived government policies.

The first step in developing an effective policy framework for counterinsurgency must be the clear delineation of political objectives. The adoption of well-conceived policy allows the state to persevere in the face of adversity, to bounce back from setbacks and to fully exploit successes and unanticipated breakthroughs. Only with a well-conceived policy framework can officials and bureaucracies devise the specific strategies for the employment of military and other resources to combat an insurgency. The policy

framework and strategy of a state must effectively counter the *opportunity, means* and *motives* that allow an insurgency to mobilize resources.

#### **D. THE STRENGTH OF THE STATE**

The *opportunity* that allowed the rise of insurgent groups in the three case studies was the weakness or absence of government institutions. In Egypt, this was evident in the failure of the state to build an adequate infrastructure, to provide social services, to develop a modern economy, and to permit social and political liberalization. The Egyptian state, however, did possess a robust security apparatus. In Colombia, the state's weakness was its near total absence from large areas of the nation's interior. This in turn allowed the rise of various insurgent, paramilitary and criminal empires within the country's borders. In Chechnya, separatist elements were able to capitalize on the collapse of Moscow's governing, administrative and state security mechanisms with the demise of the Soviet Union.

Those activities normally associated with "nation building" are necessary to strengthen friendly regimes against the onslaught of insurgency. Within the context of nation building, urban areas provide unique opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, cities and towns consolidate large segments of the population in selected locations and facilitate the conduct of Civic Action programs. In all but the most extreme threat scenarios, urban areas may facilitate security operations through the employment of curfews and checkpoints and through the conduct of cordon and search operations. On the other hand, as in the case of Grozny, the urban terrain may amplify the combat power

of lightly armed insurgent forces. Urban areas also provide direct access to the population and the media for extremist elements contemplating the use of terrorism. Additionally, the mere size of an urban population and the expanse of third-world slum areas may overwhelm the security and Civic Action capabilities of many nations.

Because of the greater population density in cities and towns, a counterinsurgency effort can achieve greater efficiency by focusing its initial efforts in large urban areas. Depending on whether an insurgency has a rural or an urban base, efforts either in the cities or the countryside will be more crippling to the insurgent resource mobilization process.

#### **E. THE IMPACT OF URBANIZATION**

A country experiencing an urbanization trend is not necessarily destined to produce an insurgency. Disjointed urbanization is one of many potential structural causes that can lead to friction between a regime and the people it represents. Of the three case studies, only Egypt showed clear signs that problems with urban overpopulation, deficiencies in infrastructure and lack of social services contributed directly to the Islamist insurgent movement. In Colombia, war refugees from the countryside have reinforced the existing patterns of urban migration, and this phenomenon may yet aggravate the deteriorating situation in that country.

The worldwide urbanization trend is undeniable; a growing percentage of people around the world are living in cities as opposed to the countryside. As a result, it is possible that future insurgencies will seek to tap into this expanding reservoir of potential

supporters. Additionally, the absence or loss of rural sanctuaries, possibly due to improved sensor technology, may drive insurgents to increasingly opt for concealment within large urban populations. However, the nature and extent of urban activities is likely to be the product of several factors, to include the level of discontent of the citizenry and the efficiency and effectiveness of local security services.

There are two major dynamics that work against the possibility that future insurgent efforts will thrive in cities: 1) While governments around the world do little to support the urban migration process, it seems that community level support networks tend to minimize the trauma of people arriving into the cities for the first time (Richards & Waterbury, 1990, p. 288). 2) Governments have traditionally been more successful in extending security and services into urban areas, which are well connected to the broader nation's economy and infrastructure, than they have been in integrating remote areas of their interior.

#### **F. MOBILIZATION GROUPS AND POLITICAL ENTREPRENEURS**

The three case studies highlight how political entrepreneurs can work through or with groups as a *means* to contest the state for power. Egyptian Islamists exploited professional forums, student organizations and other seemingly benign groups to enlist, indoctrinate and mobilize individuals in clandestine political activities; in the case of militant fringe elements, these activities included the use of terrorism and other violent methods. In Colombia, left-wing insurgent leaders were able to resurrect their campaign against the government by establishing a partnership of self-interest with elements of the

coca peasantry and with drug trafficking organizations. This strategic collaboration allowed the FARC to mobilize an unprecedented amount of financial resources in support of its insurgent campaign. In Chechnya, the clans provided the organizational structure that supported the separatist cause. They perpetuated within the Chechen population a warrior mythology that demanded resistance to outside rule. The clans laid the groundwork for a mobilization process that unleashed its full force following the collapse of the Soviet Union and during Chechnya's struggle for independence. The clans provided a focal point for political organization, criminal enterprises and other resource mobilization activities that either directly or indirectly supported the separatist movement. In each of the case studies, the pervasiveness of mobilization groups within their respective societies varied significantly.

Observers have noted the importance of discerning the "human architecture" of a population when conducting military operations in urban areas (Peters, 2000). While a society's hierarchical structure and class relations may provide useful insights, the key for a counterinsurgency effort is to identify mobilization groups and to restrict their conduct of subversive activities. Security officials may accomplish this through intelligence monitoring and penetration of these groups or through population denial and control measures. The failed Strategic Hamlet Program in Vietnam is perhaps one of the best-known examples of a population control initiative; this program sought to relocate segments of the peasantry away from contested areas in the countryside. However, under different conditions, the approach was successful in both Malaya and in the Philippines.

The establishment of security outposts within civilian communities is another technique that may deny the insurgents access to the population.

Mobilization groups provide a setting for political entrepreneurs to enlist individuals in an insurgent movement. These groups exist within a broader frustrated segment of society that is sympathetic to those advocating change. This larger constituency is sometimes referred to as an "identity group" (McCormick, 1999). Other segments of the population that may be at risk or susceptible to influence include those willing to collaborate with insurgents for the sake of personal gain or as a result of intimidation. At risk segments of the population should receive a priority in Civic Action and security efforts to insulate them from the influence of extremist elements.

Efforts to discern the human architecture should extend into the insurgent organization itself. The members of an insurgent organization may fulfill various differentiable functions: these individuals may be actual guerrilla combatants, auxiliaries who provide resources on either a part time or full time basis, or members of the underground that conduct acts of subversion, extortion, sabotage, intelligence collection and symbolic violence. Members of the auxiliary and underground form a human infrastructure to provide intelligence, recruitment, logistics, economic resources and various support activities. This infrastructure operates within the population and, in many instances, in areas that are nominally under government control. Individuals within the insurgent hierarchy may also carry out a number of political, military, administrative and logistical functions.

In an effort to carefully allocate limited security and Civic Action resources, counterinsurgency forces must discern the human architecture of the population through a modified Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) process and through an aggressive Human Intelligence (HUMINT) effort. Only HUMINT can offer insights into the moods, allegiances and activities of the civilian population. The initial stage of a HUMINT effort would be defensive in nature: by establishing a chain of informants and collaborators within the population, counterinsurgency officials can develop a protective early warning net around their forces and around key parts of the nation's infrastructure. During the second stage, officials would use an enhanced network to identify at risk segments of the population and the mobilization groups themselves. Ultimately, officials would seek to learn the extent and internal composition of insurgent organizations and to develop an accurate picture of the intelligence collection pyramid shown below. Officials are only likely to learn about individual loyalties and participation in insurgent activities through contacts within the population. The single greatest obstacle to this process is the frequent lack of tactical HUMINT capability and expertise that is necessary to exploit low-level sources and to develop local area knowledge.

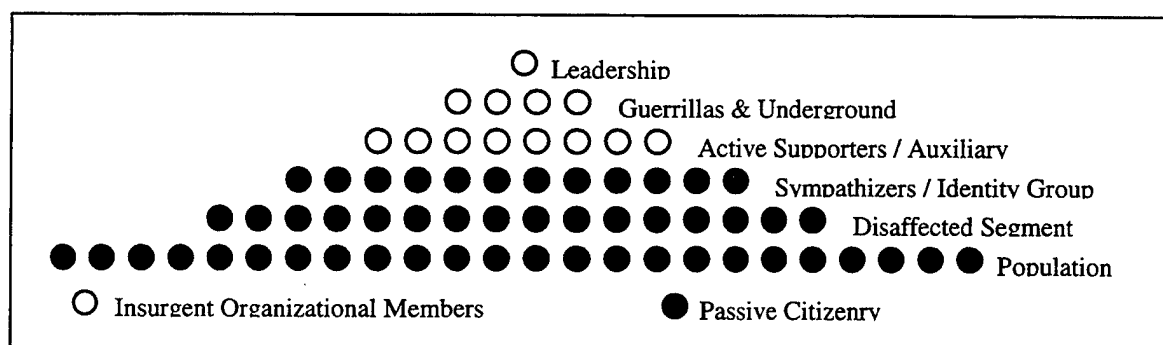


Figure 6. Intelligence Collection Pyramid



Ideally, a breakthrough in intelligence could enable a counter-leadership effort against the insurgency. While this is a legitimate long-term goal, the necessary intelligence would normally require years of investment. In the short-term, an effective intelligence campaign can target the insurgent infrastructure and its ability to mobilize resources. Insurgencies in urban areas rarely operate overtly as could the Chechens. The Egyptian model of clandestine activities would seem far more common; a major intelligence investment is absolutely necessary to counter-act clandestine insurgent activities in urban areas. The Civic Action and nation-building activities previously discussed can support the intelligence effort through frequent interaction with the population. This interaction would allow local officials to gage the general mood and allegiances of the population. Additionally, efforts to aid local communities can also prepare the ground for the establishment of local intelligence nets. Individuals who have a favorable impression of the government are more likely to cooperate as informants.

A successful intelligence campaign would begin to reveal the broader organizational structure that supports the insurgency. It would also erode the relative superiority in intelligence that is vital to the weaker insurgent combat forces:

Through their political infrastructure that binds the insurgents to their (supporters in the) population, they are able to obtain the vital information they need. Knowledge of what the enemy is doing or planning to do at all times enables the guerrilla forces to fight at moments of their own choosing; it guarantees them superiority at the moment of attack; enables them to fade away before superior counterinsurgent forces can be brought against them (Baylis, 1987, p. 216).

Actions against this human infrastructure would compromise an insurgency's security apparatus, which is essential to its survival.

The detailed identification of individual personalities, factions and sub-divisions within an insurgent movement can enable a campaign of political manipulation. Government officials could enact policies that turn the insurgency against itself. For example, political concessions to an identity group could detract support for organizational members of an insurgency. Similarly, a policy of selected amnesty could turn members of the insurgent leadership against each other. However, these policies are only likely to succeed once a detailed intelligence picture has emerged. Intelligence activities can help counterinsurgency officials gain insights into the operational methods of an insurgency; furthermore, they can begin to reveal the enemy's way of thinking.

#### **G. INSURGENT MOTIVES AND WORLDVIEW**

In its narrowest sense, the *motives* of an insurgency are the reasons for which individuals choose to participate in the movement. However, in its broadest sense, these motives are a reflection of the movement's worldview. Political entrepreneurs use this worldview to frame or relate the issues to their prospective followers: insurgent activists try to explain what is wrong with the status quo and why violence is necessary to bring about change. The process is not unlike that which is used by ideologues and activists throughout the world. However, when the process is used to mobilize resources in support of a violent campaign, it requires careful counter-action.

In each of the three case studies, insurgent leaders articulated motives to enlist individuals in a violent political campaign against the regime. These individuals participated either directly, by taking part in violent acts, or indirectly by mobilizing

resources in support of the insurgency. In each instance, this mobilization process occurred with varying degrees of success.

In Egypt, insurgent activists used the goal of an Islamic state to enlist supporters. However, few individuals agreed on how an Islamic state would address the people's grievances. Additionally, fundamentalism exerted a limited appeal because of the moderate and relatively secular nature of Egyptian society. Nonetheless, the Islamist cause helped shape the self-image of participants in the movement. Activists saw themselves as servants of the Egyptian people, advocates of moral propriety, champions of the Arab cause against Israel, and often as warriors against an evil and corrupt government.

In Colombia, members of the rural peasantry lived in poverty and felt completely ignored by their government. Guerrilla leaders were able to exploit the greed and self-interest of elements within the coca peasantry and of drug trafficking organizations. Together, these groups formed a partnership to engage in illicit narcotics activities that helped finance the insurgency. Rebel leaders developed this approach after their ideological message failed to make political inroads and after the loss of external support for their campaign. Yet, the insurgents again appeared limited in their appeal since most Colombians viewed FARC members as immoral opportunists and not as champions of the poor.

In Chechnya, the use of indiscriminate and brutal force by Moscow confirmed the worldview that prevailed within the clans. This view saw Russia as an arrogant and oppressive imperial power. Even segments of the population that were favorably

predisposed towards an accommodation with the Kremlin, saw no possibility of compromise. Most Chechens closed ranks with the more radical elements of the separatist movement. The Chechens' warrior mythology drove them to resist external aggression at all cost.

Officials directing a counterinsurgency campaign must address the issue of insurgent motives. Intelligence activities should seek to define the motives of various key individuals and groups within the insurgent organization. The intelligence effort should also seek to discern the mood and concerns of the insurgent identity group and the broader population as a whole.

Efforts to counter-act the insurgent motives can begin with policies that address the legitimate grievances of the population. Civic Action and security efforts must seek to resolve these grievances and to boost the legitimacy of the ruling regime by establishing a constructive and compassionate government presence at the community level. An understanding of the insurgents' motives and their broader worldview is necessary to provide specific disincentives for participation in the insurgency.

Psychological Operations (Psyops) should have the goal of helping to counter the insurgent mobilization process. They must reflect an understanding of a community's perspective in order to mobilize the population on behalf of the state. In general, Psychological Operations should refute the false claims of the insurgency, gain credit for the constructive actions of the regime, and dishearten individual participants in the insurgent organization. The definitive objective of a counterinsurgency campaign is inherently political and psychological in nature: to gain the support of the population for

the regime and to convince insurgent organizational members of the futility of violence. The policy framework for a counterinsurgency effort should seek to address injustices and deficiencies in the government's relations with the people. Similarly, Psychological Operations should publicize government reforms and efforts on behalf of the citizenry. Furthermore, Psychological Operations should seek to counter the specific mobilization themes of the insurgency.

Urban areas offer significant advantages for the conduct of government sponsored Psychological Operations. In most countries, the population of cities and towns are within reach of a multitude of media services. In this setting, counterinsurgency officials would have a number of options for getting their message out to various target audiences. Typically, the government security apparatus in urban areas will force insurgent propaganda efforts underground, but would be hard pressed to eliminate them altogether. Psychological Operations must counter the effects of insurgent propaganda.

In the case of both Chechnya and Colombia, insurgent elements have sought to use the Internet to express their ideas to the international community (*Resistencia*, 1996; Kavkaz-Center, 2000). However, this medium appears less efficient for domestic audiences in the third world where computer use is less prevalent and where authorities can restrict Internet access.

## **H. COUNTERING THE INSURGENT TACTICAL PATH**

In each of the case studies, insurgent groups chartered very different tactical paths in their respective struggles. In Egypt, extremists in the Islamic Group and in *al-Gihad*

chose to conduct terrorist campaigns against Western tourists, representatives of the regime and Coptic Christians. The use of terrorism, in part, reflected the fact that the Islamist movement lacked the type of following necessary for a popular revolt and that Egyptian geography and topography could not support a rural guerrilla campaign.

In Colombia, FARC leaders, in general, chose to pursue a traditional guerrilla strategy in the countryside. This effort sought to maximize political pressure on the regime in Bogota by employing decisive force against isolated outposts deep in Colombia's interior. FARC also mounted a significant supporting effort through its underground organization: insurgent cells conducted various acts of symbolic violence, subversion, intimidation, kidnapping for ransom and other acts of extortion within urban areas throughout the country.

In Chechnya, Aslan Maskhadov directed a desperate military campaign to resist the Russian security forces. Chechen fighters fought at times as guerrillas and at times as conventional infantry, often exploiting the urban terrain to neutralize the firepower and technological advantage of their adversary. In some instances, the Chechens resorted to terrorism as well.

Typically, counterinsurgency forces fall into the trap of viewing their conflict with a conventional mindset. Government forces often seek to destroy insurgent field forces by means of fire and maneuver in much the same manner they would battle the army of an invading nation state. The problem with this counter-force approach is two fold: 1) Thanks to their human infrastructure in the population, insurgent forces generally control the engagement tempo and avoid or break off contact when they are unsure of succeeding.

2) A counter-force approach often inadvertently punishes civilians, either through collateral damage or wanton abuse, and indirectly enhances support for the insurgency. When confronted with a terrorist threat, government security forces may in frustration engage in acts of reactionary violence that, in seeking to eliminate subversive elements, again antagonize broad segments of the population.

Security officials participated in clear acts of reactionary repression in both the Egypt and Chechnya cases and at times failed to differentiate between active participants and those who were members of the broader insurgent identity groups. In Colombia, reactionary violence by the government was rare. The armed forces and police accounted for 2% of all human rights complaints in 1999; however, massacres by right-wing paramilitary groups against the rural peasantry constituted the most severe human rights violations in the country (de Young, 16 March 2000). In some instances, observers linked paramilitary violence to elements within the military; the result was counter-productive to the government's efforts to enhance its legitimacy and sphere of control.

Government security forces must defend against and counter the tactical operations of insurgent elements. But, they must do so in a manner that is effective and does not alienate the population. Military personnel must integrate combat operations into a broader strategy that targets the insurgency's ability to mobilize resources. Military operations must be surgical in nature; armed forces personnel must discriminately target guerrilla fighters while eroding popular support for the insurgency within the population.

Intelligence is the key for the conduct of surgical combat actions against insurgent forces. As already stated, intelligence developed through collection nets and through

contacts with the civilian population during Civic Action activities offers the best chances of success to satisfy the requirements of a counterinsurgency campaign. Technical means of intelligence collection are likely to only play a supporting role given the low tech and interpersonal nature of community level insurgent activities. Technical intelligence collection is capable of breakthroughs of the type that enabled the Russian forces to locate and kill Dzhokhar Dudayev, the first president of Chechnya. Long-range reconnaissance patrolling can make a contribution. However, it is likely to be most effective when employed as follow-up to reports generated through other methods.

No matter how surgical and proficient, combat operations are inadequate to neutralize the insurgent underground and auxiliary. These elements operate within the civilian population, often in areas that are already under government control. The underground and auxiliary are clandestine in nature, and individual members often serve on a part-time basis. The functioning of the underground and auxiliary is most likely to break down when there is a sustained security presence at the community level, of the type already outlined in this chapter. A constructive security presence can hamper insurgent activities, insulate the population from political entrepreneurs, erode popular support for the insurgency, and enlist the cooperation of the citizenry on behalf of the government. Efforts to apprehend key insurgent operatives should resemble police investigations. Again, an in-depth intelligence effort is the key to the success of such an endeavor.

The Egyptian case study illustrates the limits of combat operations in a counterinsurgency effort. The Islamist movement had no field forces; rather, the two



components of the insurgency were an extremist underground and a broader auxiliary support structure. Egyptian military forces could establish defensive security around key parts of the nation's infrastructure and provide a visible government presence for the citizenry. Military forces could also act in response to extremist actions. What the Egyptian military could not do was to mount a conventional offensive campaign against the elusive and clandestine Islamist extremists.

Even in those case studies where insurgent field forces did exist, it was the insurgents who tended to control the engagement tempo. In Chechnya, separatist forces bled the Russian army for months in the streets of Grozny. When the Chechens decided the time was right, they withdrew from the city, only to later return at a time of their choosing. In Colombia, broad area sweeps by the army's counter-guerrilla brigades rarely seemed to produce decisive results. Rather, major actions tended to occur when initiated by FARC. Colombia, in particular, illustrates the deficiencies of the search-and-destroy method that is commonly employed by military forces against guerrillas. An alternative military approach, which can work well with the framework outlined in this chapter, is the proverbial "oil slick" technique.

The oil slick or inkblot method of pacification was first developed by generals Gallieni and Lyautey of the French Colonial Army. This technique established security zones around selected population enclaves. These security spheres were then systematically expanded. The goal was to encourage indigenous peoples to rally to the French zones to receive the benefits of security, trade and prosperity (Porch, 1986, 1997). In essence, this approach sought to control the population and thus to constrain the

insurgency's ability to mobilize resources. While the French enjoyed limited success with the approach, the technique proved effective when combined with aggressive Civic Action, Psychological Operations, and intelligence activities. Counterinsurgency forces have successfully used versions of this approach in Malaya (Cable, 1986), during Creighton Abrams' "clear and hold" operations in Vietnam (Sorley, 1999), in the Ucayali region of Peru and elsewhere. The approach, nevertheless, has drawn suspicion from military officers who are prone to see it as defensive and as surrendering the initiative to the enemy (Record, 1996, p.6). While tactically defensive, the technique makes possible a strategy that is politically and psychologically offensive, one that contests control of the population and systematically reduces the operating space of an insurgency.

The oil slick technique seems ideal for large urban areas where the sphere of government control can expand from neighborhood to neighborhood and later from the cities into the countryside. Combat operations outside the government's population enclaves would tend to occur in response to detailed intelligence findings.

Control of lines of communications between the towns and cities is also likely to be important both to facilitate the economic development of the urban areas and to hinder insurgent tactical mobility and resource mobilization activities. Drug trafficking routes over land, on rivers and through the air played a key role in the resource mobilizing activities of the insurgency in Colombia (Mitchell, 1999; Traffickers, April 2000). Similarly, the smuggling of black market goods through Chechnya to the rest of the former Soviet Union also contributed to the clans' resources (Gall & de Waal, 1998, p. 119).

## I. CONCLUSION

Insurgent conflicts have a center of gravity that is political and psychological, rather than military in nature. Furthermore, insurgencies subsist with the support of a human infrastructure that mobilizes resources within the population. Individuals tasked with combating insurgent violence must recognize the role of the population and the broader political and psychological context of their struggle.

The lack of presence or legitimacy of a state can contribute to the conditions that allow an insurgency to arise; this can occur when the pace of urbanization far exceeds a government's ability to provide infrastructure and services. However, a nation experiencing runaway urbanization is not destined to have an insurgent conflict.

Ultimately, the goal of a counterinsurgency campaign must be to target the *opportunity, means* and *motives* that allow an insurgency to mobilize resources. Officials can accomplish this through a strategy that aggressively employs Civic Action, development programs, Psychological Operations, human intelligence activities, population security measures, and surgically targeted combat operations.

## VII. CONCLUSION – PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Where liberty dwells not, *there* is my country!

Thomas Paine 1737-1809  
(Lansdale, 1991)

### A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will argue that Special Operations Forces (SOF) in general, and Army Special Forces in particular, are the instrument of choice to assist friendly nations that confront the onslaught of insurgency. Army Special Forces can provide advisory support and synchronize the efforts of various US government agencies and other SOF assets. SOF personnel can help to strengthen a supported nation's institutions and to develop a comprehensive counterinsurgency campaign plan. Selected Special Forces personnel can also advise a supported nation on how to develop the critically important tactical-level intelligence resources to mount an effective counterinsurgency effort. The employment of a low-level SOF option in future insurgent conflicts would constitute an economy-of-force that would preserve US combat power for other contingencies.

This chapter will also survey the current status of US counterinsurgency doctrine in light of the various themes developed earlier in this study. The importance of doctrine arises from the fact that US civilian and military leaders are likely to rely on doctrine to guide their decision-making with respect to future insurgent conflicts. Furthermore, advisors in the field are also likely to use doctrine to shape their understanding of the type of conflict they are fighting.

## **B. LESSONS FOR SOF**

In his essay "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars," Andrew Mack (1975) highlights the asymmetry of interests and of resolve that often characterize conflicts between major powers and their rivals in the third world. Major powers tend to fight "small wars" over secondary interests. Their rivals, be they nation-states or irregular actors, generally have primary issues at stake. While a major power may possess superior military and economic resources, it generally enters a limited conflict from a position of relative political and psychological weakness. For this reason, the United States should avoid "Americanizing" conflicts and should instead apply the model that it used in El Salvador. During this conflict, the US provided limited, but sustainable support to a friendly regime.

Insurgent conflicts in the future will be protracted and will likely engage the secondary interests of the United States. Efforts to support friendly regimes will require a flexible application of military, political, economic and information resources. A limited advisory commitment, spearheaded by SOF, is more likely to be sustainable and will be less damaging to the very institutions the US seeks to uplift in the supported nation. The key to success of such an effort would be to sensitize decision makers and future military advisors to the dynamics of insurgency and the unique problems posed by urban areas.

An effective advisory effort should include the senior political leadership of a supported country. Normally, a US ambassador would satisfy this requirement. However, in both the Philippines and South Vietnam, the United States, in various instances, employed a counterinsurgency subject matter expert to advise the political

leaders of these two countries (Lansdale, 1991). US officials should seriously consider the employment of a counterinsurgency political advisor in the future; such an official could report directly to the US ambassador.

SOF soldiers have several characteristics that enable them to provide assistance to friendly governments that are combating insurgent violence. Army Special Forces, in particular, possess the cultural and linguistic skills necessary to operate within a foreign society. While the parameters for SOF employment are generally outlined in Joint Pub 3-07.1 *Joint Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense* (26 June 1996), the specific recommendations of this study go beyond the provisions currently envisioned in doctrine.

Army Special Forces can provide advisory support that is vertically integrated with a supported nation's chain-of-command. From their unique vantage point as advisors, Army Special Forces troops can help integrate the efforts of various US government agencies and other SOF assets with those of the Host Nation. Special Forces personnel can also assist local officials in developing a comprehensive counterinsurgency campaign plan. The objective of these efforts would be to strengthen a supported nation's political, judicial and military institutions. Army Special Forces are ideal for this role for three reasons: 1) Special Forces provide a low-profile option that is politically acceptable to the Host Nation and sustainable over the long-term for the United States. 2) Many nations rely on military or militarized police units to provide a community level state presence in contested areas; Special Forces soldiers who are familiar with the local language and culture can work effectively with indigenous forces. 3) Special Forces

possess a conceptual understanding of insurgency and a self-protection capability that are appropriate to these types of conflicts. Special Forces soldiers also have the tactical training, maturity, and rank structure that make them the uncontested advisors-of-choice for the conduct of semi-autonomous operations in a foreign country. For these reasons, Special Forces personnel should play a key role in developing and executing a counterinsurgency assistance effort.

SOF military advisors can operate at the local, sub-national, and national level. These advisors can work with counterinsurgency officials in the supported country to develop and carry out the policies of their government. Civilian advisors may also be necessary to assist non-military institutions. An advisory program should provide effective vertical integration starting at the policy level. Additionally, the advisory effort should ensure the mobilization of all resources and institutions in a supported state on behalf of its counterinsurgency campaign. An advisor operating at the sub-national level should act as the coordinating authority for all US assistance into his geographic area of responsibility. A US advisory effort can begin to ensure internal synchronization by requiring all advisors and key officials, civilian and military, to attend a pre-deployment training course; this course would ensure that all participants understand US policy and the specifics on how the US plans to aid the supported nation. The primary goal of the advisory effort would be to assist the supported nation in countering the *opportunity*, *means* and *motives* of the insurgency.

SOF soldiers can assist in a variety of nation-building activities. Advisors and training teams can help make the military of a supported country more professional and

responsive to local community needs. US advisors, for example, can prompt the Host Nation military to engage in direct Civic Action activities on behalf of the people and to support the rule of law. Additionally, Civil Affairs soldiers are uniquely capable of supporting the development of various governing, administrative, and public services. In some scenarios, conventional military engineers and military police may also play a role in re-establishing services and in re-building a nation's infrastructure; the commitment of these types of troops may significantly increase the profile of US involvement. The full array of nation-building activities, however, is beyond the capability of the US military and would require the broad participation of a number of US government agencies with their respective resources and development programs.

The critical target of a counterinsurgency effort must be the human network that supports the insurgents from within the population. Security officials can constrain and compromise this infrastructure through a constructive presence at the community level and through a campaign that targets the opportunity, means and motives of the insurgents. In so doing, officials must draw political support to their cause and away from the insurgency, strengthen the psychological resilience of their regime, while convincing the insurgents of the futility of their violent methods. Efforts to identify and neutralize the insurgent infrastructure would also require a detailed intelligence picture to discern the loyalties and grievances of the population.

Selected Army Special Forces personnel can advise commanders in a supported nation on how to develop a community level Human Intelligence (HUMINT) effort. US advisors could verify the proper synchronization of this effort within a broader national



level approach. When appropriate, US advisors can coordinate the sharing of intelligence between the United States and the Host Nation. The participation of military advisors in these intelligence activities is a significant addition to their traditional scope of responsibilities. These intelligence functions are more often associated with the intelligence services or with law enforcement agencies. However, an effort to conduct HUMINT activities within local communities will require the participation of indigenous tactical level assets. This is only likely to happen with the encouragement and guidance of US military advisors.

Efforts to earn the support of the population will undoubtedly require Psychological Operations (Psyops). US Psyops soldiers, and to a lesser extent other SOF personnel, can advise and assist counterinsurgency officials in a supported nation on how to develop an effective psychological campaign plan. New developments in digital photography and in computers have a great potential to enhance the effects of low-budget community level Psyops activities. Host Nation officials and US advisors would have to ensure that these activities are vertically integrated into a national plan that is well in synch with the supported nation's policy framework. Psyops activities and combat operations would both require detailed coordination.

### **C. DOCTRINAL PREPAREDNESS**

US doctrinal preparedness is the single most critical area as we look to future insurgent conflicts. The reason for this is that America's initial military response to an insurgent conflict is already likely to be an advisory effort. US advisors will rely on

doctrine to direct their efforts in support of a Host Nation. The security forces of a supported nation, in all probability, will possess more troops and better equipment and training than their insurgent adversaries. Unlike conventional wars that demand a large peacetime investment in materiel, America's success in future unconventional conflicts will disproportionately rely on a sound conceptual framework that can enable an effective first time approach to the problem. Theater CINCs, national military leaders, staff officers at all levels, and most importantly US military advisors in the field are likely to rely on doctrine to orient and direct their efforts.

The most current edition of Field Manual (FM) 100-5 *Operations* (14 June 1993), the Army's centerpiece doctrinal publication, dedicates one chapter, out of fourteen, to the subject of "Operations Other Than War." But, within this chapter only one paragraph discusses both "Support for Insurgencies and Counterinsurgency." The same chapter also contains a small section on Security Assistance activities.

A decade and a half ago, Andrew Krepinevich drew attention to the military's lack of doctrinal preparedness for dealing with insurgent conflicts prior to the Vietnam War, and he argued that the problem was persistent in the military. He rightfully claimed that the Army of the 1960s had "failed to develop a coherent doctrine for counterinsurgency through its educational system, field manuals, military journals or field training." He also argued that despite the publication of the much improved FM 100-20 *Military Operations in a Low Intensity Conflict* (LIC)(12 May 1990), that unconventional war retained a second class status in Army thinking (Krepinevich, 1994 p. 137; 1986).

FM 100-20 does a respectable job of highlighting some of the unique political considerations that often surround low intensity conflicts. The publication dedicates a chapter to the issue of "Support for Insurgencies and Counter Insurgencies" and also has two appendices on the subject. In general, the document does much to capture the character of insurgencies and the importance of the population in these conflicts, but fails to describe the organizational infrastructure that supports insurgent movements. The manual describes the adoption of an Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) campaign as the focal point of a counterinsurgency effort. While the approach is sound, the publication is short on specifics, and the framework may run the risk of depicting the motives of all insurgencies as being economic in nature. The publication barely footnotes the use of Psyops and Civil Affairs (CA). The primary comment with respect to CA is that they are "military operations embracing relations between US military forces, civilian authorities, and the populace." FM 100-20 also mentions the use of security assistance and the importance of tactical intelligence:

Tactical intelligence support may be the single most beneficial support the United States can provide in many situations. US forces can contribute experience and expertise to establish and manage all-source intelligence operations and enhance overall management of the intelligence effort....This requires close coordination with host nation police and legal officials (FM 100-20, Ch. 2, 12 May 1990).

FM 7-98 *Operations in a Low-Intensity Conflict* (19 October 1992) is an accompanying manual to FM 100-20. However, FM 7-98 has a counter-force emphasis that seems to somewhat neglect the political and psychological aspects of counterinsurgency. The manual highlights the use of conventional brigades and battalion task forces in counterinsurgency within the context of "Foreign Internal Defense

Augmentation Force Operations" (Chapter 2, Section 2). While the Army should by all means plan for the possible employment of conventional units in insurgent conflicts, it should do so within the context of a comprehensive political-military strategy. FM 7-98 offers no significant discussion of IDAD or military Civic Action and fails to offer any conceptual parameters for the conduct of a pacification campaign. The manual makes a brief comment on the "intelligence network in the insurgent infrastructure." It also recognizes that the insurgency's greatest weakness is its reliance on a base of popular support for logistics, but in error calls for the exploitation of this weakness by interdicting supply routes and facilities (Chapter 2, Section 1). This conventional depiction of logistical activities is rarely accurate in insurgent conflicts.

Surprisingly, the earlier published FM 90-8 *Counter guerrilla Operations* (29 August 1986) contains some useful insights into the broader issues of counterinsurgency. As indicated by its title, the manual is primarily a counter-force document designed to provide the conventional brigade commander with a basis for conducting counter-guerrilla operations. While stating that the brigade commander is "primarily concerned with tactical operations in strike campaigns," the publication is right on target when it mentions the importance of IDAD's "five major operations...intelligence, psychological operations, civil affairs, populace and resource control, and advisory assistance." Additionally, FM 90-8 discusses the importance of the "clandestine exploitation of civilian [intelligence] sources," while acknowledging that such an effort is normally beyond the capability of a conventional brigade (Appendix H). Where the manual falls

short is in its lack of description of the broader insurgent infrastructure that supports the guerrillas in the field.

FM 7-98 and FM 90-8 mention the potential problem of urban insurgents, and the latter manual outlines the possible use of roadblocks and cordon-and-search operations. Additionally, both these publications and FM 100-20 speak of three phases of insurgency that parallel those found in Maoist doctrine: Phase I – Latent and Incipient Insurgency, Phase II – Guerrilla Warfare, Phase III – War of Movement. Interestingly, while the three case studies in this thesis did not necessarily progress in this sequence, Egypt appears as essentially a phase I, Colombia as a phase II and Chechnya as largely a phase III conflict.

It is important to note that all of the above publications tend to refer to Civil Affairs as either liaison functions with civilian officials and the population or as the activities of Civil Affairs units in support of the citizenry. These manuals fail to acknowledge the proven potential of direct military Civic Action in support of the population. The use of medical service troops, engineers, water-purification teams, transportation resources, military police and even the manpower of infantry units in support of the population can offer significant benefits in terms of generating goodwill and intelligence.

An Army manual that provides excellent insight into the subject of insurgency is FM 31-20 *Doctrine for Special Forces Operations* (20 April 1990). This document contains a chapter on Unconventional Warfare (UW), that entails the offensive use of

insurgent tactics against an adversary, and a chapter on Foreign Internal Defense (FID). The publication thus provides unique insight into both sides of an insurgent struggle.

The chapter on FID highlights the central role of an IDAD campaign and the importance of Psyops, intelligence activities, civil-military operation, and population and resource control measures. While the discussion of these topics does not contain much more detail than some of the other publications already mentioned, there is a difference in tone. The manual states that, "The objective of an IDAD program should not be to kill or even capture the insurgents. It should be to convince them to abandon a hopeless or worthless cause and support the HN (Host Nation) government." This is very much a counter-mobilization approach that stands in contrast to the counter-force approach advocated by some of the other publications. With respect to urban insurgents, the manual mentions the fact that they "normally" try to take advantage of legitimate civilian organizations by subverting their goals and objectives, in much the same manner as the Islamists exploited professional forums in Egypt. FM 31-20 also offers an advisory architecture that includes the national government of a supported country and calls for the creation of national, regional, provincial and district coordination centers with US and Host Nation participation (Chapter 10).

The chapter on UW in FM 31-20 provides excellent insight into the possible organizational structure of an insurgent movement. It clearly delineates between the overt military or paramilitary arm of a resistance organization and the broader auxiliary and underground components that are clandestine and cellular in nature. The chapter also provides a useful perspective on the logistical difficulties insurgents often face and

includes a caption with Mao's Rules of Discipline and Points for Attention. These rules underline the critical importance of popular support:

RULES OF DISCIPLINE	POINTS FOR ATTENTION
Obey orders in all your actions	Speak politely
Do not take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses	Pay fairly for what you buy
Turn in everything you capture	Return everything you borrow
	Pay for everything you damage
	Do not hit or swear at people
	Do not damage crops
	Do not take liberties with women
	Do not ill-treat captives

Table 2. Mao's Rules

These points are the maxims of someone who is operating on a political and psychological plane. Unfortunately, as a Special Forces publication, FM 31-20 is outside of the doctrinal mainstream in the US Army (FM 31-20, Chapter 9). Other specialized Army publications do offer further details on the conduct of Psychological Operations and Civil Affairs.

An additional category of counterinsurgency doctrine is contained in the military's joint publications. The lead document for unconventional conflicts is Joint Pub 3-07 *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War* (16 June 1995). This manual, however, contains only one brief paragraph on "Nation Assistance/Support to

Counterinsurgency” and one somewhat longer paragraph on Foreign Internal Defense. These paragraphs briefly attempt to define their respective topics.

A far more definitive approach to the problem of insurgency is contained in Joint Pub 3-07.1 *Joint Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for Foreign Internal Defense* (26 June 1996). This publication is probably the single most important document to outline what a US response to insurgent conflicts would be. Like many of the joint pubs, the manual has an organizational focus: it outlines how various services and agencies should work together in a FID scenario, while containing few technical and tactical solutions. The document categorically states that FID “is a multinational interagency effort, requiring synchronization of all elements of national power” (Chapter 1). It also distinguishes between three levels of support for friendly regimes: Indirect Support, Direct Support (Not Involving Combat Operations), and Combat Operations. The first of these categories could involve security assistance, to include military advisors and training teams (Chapter 4).

Joint Pub 3-07.1 also argues that the concept for FID emerges from what is known as the Nixon or Guam Doctrine, which states that the US would assist friendly nations, but would require them to provide manpower and be ultimately responsible for their own national defense (Chapter 1). This approach would allow a long-term sustainable effort that in most cases would be politically acceptable to the supported nation. The publication provides a detailed description of an IDAD strategy, which includes a possible structure for a Counterinsurgency Planning and Coordination Organization that



would operate at the national and sub-national level (Appendix C). Unfortunately, Joint Pub 3-07.1 is less well known outside of the SOF community.

Another joint publication with some relevance is Joint Pub 30-08 *Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations* (9 October 1996). This document includes a number of concepts “to best achieve coordination between combatant commanders and agencies of the USG (US Government), NGOs (Non-Government Organizations) and PVOs (Private Voluntary Organizations).” The publication mentions the role of the Security Assistance Organization (SAO) in supervising FID activities at the ambassadorial level. However, the document makes no direct mention of counterinsurgency operations and is somewhat ambiguous on command relationships (Chapter 2).

Joint Pub 3-05 *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations* (17 April 1998) and Joint Pub 3-05.3 *Joint Special Operations Operational Procedures* (25 August 1993) briefly define FID and state that SOF’s primary contribution in this interagency activity is to organize, train, advise, and assist Host Nation military and paramilitary forces. These two documents offer no specific advice with reference to the problem of insurgency and only discuss Psychological Operations and Civil Affairs units and activities in broad terms. Ironically, in discussing Special Operations in terms of the principles of war, these documents fail to shed light on the unique psychological and political leveraging potential of SOF. Other joint publications discuss Psychological Operations and Civil Affairs in greater detail.

The general assessment of US doctrinal preparedness for counterinsurgency is mixed. Joint Pub 3-07.1 *JTTP for Foreign Internal Defense* provides a reasonable description for how the US can best support a counterinsurgency effort. Overall, however, US doctrine lacks specificity on how to mount a pacification campaign and retains a counter-force bias. Various publications shed light on different aspects of Low Intensity Conflict and insurgencies; nevertheless, the Army is sorely in need of a comprehensive counterinsurgency publication. Such a manual would guide advisor and training teams at the national, sub-national/regional and tactical level of an insurgent conflict. A comprehensive publication could also provide guidance for the type of pre-deployment training course mentioned earlier in this chapter. This manual could build upon the IDAD approach, but should include specific tactics, techniques and procedures that recognize the political and psychological nature of insurgent conflicts. The document should outline detailed actions that can exploit the insurgency's logistical weakness and vulnerability to intelligence activities. Ultimately, the US should stress a counter-mobilization strategy, as opposed to a counter-force approach, by focusing on the *opportunity, means* and *motives* that allow an insurgency to generate resources.

Another aspect of US conceptual preparedness deals with the officer professional development system that still grossly shortchanges the problem of insurgencies and unconventional conflicts in general. This development system, embodied in the branch, service and staff schools, marks each phase of an officer's career progression. The historical experiences of US forces and personnel in the Huk Rebellion, during the Marine Corps' Combined Action Platoon (CAP) program and Creighton Abrams' "clear

and hold” operations in Vietnam, as well as during the advisor missions in El Salvador are powerful examples of effective counterinsurgency actions that the mainstream Army has not fully explored or assimilated.

While the Special Forces community might appear more sensitized to the unique dynamics of insurgent conflicts, it is the mainstream Army and policy makers who will generally decide upon engagement strategies and the employment of US ground forces. There is the real possibility that the SOF perspective may go unheeded in future policy debates both at the national level and within our theater commands. Without further study, discussion and doctrinal refinement, the US may embark upon an ill-conceived strategy in an insurgent conflict. The years since the war in El Salvador have seen growing support within the military for the employment of advisors within the context of Foreign Internal Defense. However, there is no evidence of a joint or multi-agency consensus for the conduct of a counter-mobilization campaign.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

Insurgent leaders exploit a number of *opportunities, means* and *motives* to mobilize resources on their behalf, and they adopt a variety of operational methods. Insurgents obtain support through a human infrastructure within the civilian population that provides the resources necessary for the conduct of an armed campaign. Insurgent conflicts have a center of gravity that is political and psychological, rather than military in nature.

The future may see a growing number of insurgent struggles in urban areas. However, a country that cannot provide adequate services and infrastructure because of rapid urbanization is not necessarily destined to produce an insurgency.

Ultimately, the US should refine its doctrine and sensitize its leaders to the unique dynamics of insurgent conflicts in order to ensure future success. Army Special Forces can spearhead US efforts to support friendly regimes that face insurgent conflicts. Specifically in their role as advisors, Special Forces can help synchronize the efforts of various US government agencies and other SOF assets with those of the Host Nation. A US advisory effort should seek to strengthen a supported nation's institutions and to develop a comprehensive counterinsurgency campaign plan.

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